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The Separated Life.



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The Separated Life.

A BIBLICAL DEFENCE OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

BY

JOHN EDWIN WHITEKER, D.D.

AUTHOR OF ANALYSIS OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION, WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES;
BAPTISM; BIBLE BIOGRAPHY; COMFORT FOR CROSS-BEARERS, CHURCH
AND STATE, AND OTHER SHORT TREATISES

With an Introduction by

THEODORE E. SCHMAUK.

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TO THE MEMORY OF
CHARLES ALLEN FONDERSMITH,
A MAN WHO LIVED IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST
AND WHO DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO CHRIST-LIKE WORKS OF LOVE,
THIS VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is possible to be an American without belief in the principle for which our forefathers laid down their lives; and without conforming our faith or practice to the written and unwritten Constitution. Such Americans, retaining and prizing the name, have lost the substance.

Thus it is possible to call one's self a Christian without accepting the central principle of Christianity. The principle of Christianity is Christ, and to be a Christian is to accept Christ in the sense in His own interpretation of Himself. His Gospel to man is not one of the fatherhood, or of the brotherhood; but it is the offering of Himself for us that, through Him, there may be divine and human fellowship.

This generation, like its predecessors, has sought to find the essence of Christianity in His life and deeds, rather than in His death and merits. In this book our author examines the question anew. In a series of splendidly luminous character pictures, on the ground of the actual records of His life, we see what is the fundamental principle of this Man, Separated from all the World, but claiming attention of every growing mind. No matter what we believe, or in what sense we are Christians, the great fact about this book is its absence of sentimentalism, and its search for a simple, lucid,

INTRODUCTION.

adequate, and final explanation of Him, Who "the Holiest among the Mighty," and "the Mightiest among the Holy," as Richter says, "has lifted with His pierced hand empires off their hinges, has turned the streams of centuries out of their channels, and still governs the ages."

THEODORE E. SCHMAUK.

P R E F A C E .

WE live in critical times—times of critical tests: microscopic scrutinies, lime-light exposures, X-ray studies. Men have become skeptical along all lines of antiquities; they refuse to accept the findings of a former age. World-history has been rewritten; world-science has been revised; world-customs have been searched out—they have given to concurrent literature a new sense. The scrap-heap of human theories, human philosophies, human guesses, has grown to significant size of late. And every man whose work has added to its monumental proportions is as proud of it as if he had produced a masterpiece of art.

The realm of religion has not escaped the critical eye. The horizon of Natural Theology has been scanned to its utmost limits: the field of Christian Evidences has been searched as never before. Old systems of doctrine have been discarded, supplemented, or recast: the very Bible has been dragged through the fires. Men seem to be infected with a sort of iconoclastic mania: an incendiary spirit has seized them, and nothing satisfies them but a universal blaze. They have no reverence for the settled certitudes of Scripture: to them there are no certitudes. They have no respect for the doctrinal developments of the past: to them there is no such thing as the unfolding of religious truth. They have laid the axe to the root of the tree: the keen edge has gone to the heart of it.

We are told that history repeats itself: there is ample proof of it. The Son of Man moved among men in humble, lowly state. The Scribes and Pharisees became His bitter foes. They watched Him; they tried to entrap Him in His talk; they plotted against Him: at

PREFACE.

last, they nailed Him to the accursed tree. They were Christ's critics! But the common people heard Him gladly. To-day, men are doing the same—the very same in essence and spirit. They catch at every possible quibble: they pervert His speech, wresting the inner thought from it. They put on Him mock royal robes when they praise His virtues; they crucify Him, bury Him, put an everlasting seal upon His grave, by denying His Godhead and giving but a mortal limit to His life. But in spite of these modern Scribes and Pharisees, the great mass of Church people gladly learn of Him and find in Him their rest and peace.

It is for such people that the succeeding chapters are put into print: it is not for the critics. Ephraim is joined to idols; he hath mixed himself among the heathen and hath learned their works: the injunction is, "Let him alone." But those who believe in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, need to be established in their Christian faith and fortified in their Christian life. It was with this design that the following series of sermons was prepared and preached at consecutive church services, and are now published that a larger congregation may read them to their spiritual profit. If the reader finds that strength and assurance in their perusal which the writer found in their preparation, the work, wrought out in a busy pastorate, will have accomplished the purpose that inspired it. And to God, the only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ, for ever, and ever. Amen.

JOHN E. WHITTEKER.

LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA,
Ash Wednesday, 1909.

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CHAPTER I.

THE SEPARATED LIFE.

EVERYTHING in this world admits of classification: everything in earth and sea and air has its appointed place, its setting according to its nature: nothing stands alone. Birds and beasts, rocks and trees: these are divided and subdivided according to common qualities and put in separate catalogues. The man skilled in science knows the setting of each, because he knows its nature. As a rule, every man of common knowledge knows their place; for there are marked distinctions in their formation or their mode of life. And so, in all the universe, there is nothing that stands apart.

This fact holds good in the world of men. They are classified according to nationalities: they are subdivided into trades, professions, offices, and the like. There are sages, scientists, philosophers, warriors, statesmen, priests: classification everywhere. And in it all, no one man stands alone: he is one of a multitude. This holds good in all the history of the human race.

There is a notable exception to this universal rule: the name of Jesus stands alone—His name is above every name. He was separate from sinners: aye, He was separate from saints. It was written of Him, and of no one else, “He did no sin, neither 1 Peter 2: 22. was guile found in his mouth.” As sinners cannot be classed with saints; so saints cannot be classed

with Him in the conduct of their lives. It is this separateness alike from saints and sinners that makes His life unique. He does not stand like a mountain height, towering a little above the peaks round about it: He is like a sun among spheres—a class by itself, the only one in it. There was an absolute aloneness to His earth-life.

This is already indicated in the announcement of His birth: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called The Son of God.” Hence, too, that marvellous salutation of Elizabeth, who spake as she was moved by the Holy Ghost: “And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” The Son of God: conceived by the Holy Ghost: born of the Virgin Mary: Lord of the human race—the advent of no other mortal is marked by terms such as these. And of none other was it ever said, “The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.” This absolute purity of birth as well as distinct ascendancy of life, is ascribed only to Christ.

If we leap the years of private life and find Him moving down to Jordan’s bank, the same wonderful truth confronts us. John the Baptist shrank from the holy duty that was set before him: “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” And yet, Jesus Himself assures us that of those that were born of woman, there was not a greater than John the Baptist. It was not mere

sensitiveness of nature that led John to hold back from the duties of his office. He was ever bold to speak and to act, when a sense of duty drove him to it. His very boldness cost him his life. But it was his consciousness of the fact that He who thus presented Himself, was none other than the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; it was his conviction that those who sought baptism should confess their sins and bring forth fruits meet for repentance: it was these two conflicting facts that set Jesus alone among men, and above the needs of baptism as John administered it.

And so, in His baptism there was no confession of sins on the part of Christ; for there were no sins to confess: there was no repentance on His part; for there was nothing of which to repent. There was an appointed official act, with the seal of the Almighty upon it: for the heavens were opened; and the Spirit of God descended like a dove and lighted upon Him; and a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." *Matt. 3: 16, 17.* In all the years of John's ministry, in all the centuries of God's covenant with His ancient people, in all the days of the Apostles, and of the Fathers and Brethren to this present time, there has been no baptism like that of Jesus, in kind and outcome. Here, again, He is separate from sinners, separate from saints: in His baptism, He stands alone.

The same thought is strikingly presented in the Institution of the Holy Supper: "This is my *Matt. 26: 26, 28* body;" "This is my blood." Who of the chosen Twelve would have dared to utter words like these?

Who of men, to-day, would take them upon their lips and apply them to themselves? What blasphemy it would be: what sacrilege against God's holy institute! But when Jesus speaks them, men stand in awe: there is a sacredness and a solemnity, in thought and tone and heavenly intent, that make them unparalleled in all His utterances. Aside from all doctrinal significance that inhere in these words, "My Body, My Blood"—whether men teach transubstantiation, the real presence, or find in them only a figure of speech: aside from all this, these are words which no mere man may attach to his own name. A devout man would be shocked at the thought of it: a profane man would shrink from so great sacrilege. And so, once again Jesus is separate from sinners, separate from saints: the Holy Supper classes Him alone.

His relation to the Father is a peculiar one. No one ever held fellowship with God so intimate as did He. This is indicated in a general way when Jesus says, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. 11: 27. But the chief distinction in this respect, the complete separateness of His life from that of men of every rank and name, is brought out most strikingly when His personal relation with the Father becomes His theme. Here He stands alone—consciously, deliberately alone.

The words, "My Father," were upon His lips with each passing event. He never said, "Our Father:"

He shared the peculiar personal honor with none. He taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father;" but He never prayed it. And so marked was the distinction in His own mind, and so essential was its nature, that after His resurrection, He commissioned Mary with the significant message, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." They were His brethren: He here acknowledges the relationship. And yet, He sets Himself apart from them: He puts them in a class by themselves, and Himself alone. In all the relations of this life, He and His disciples were a unit; but in His relation to God, there was a special personal element in which they did not share. He could say—but they could not say it—"I and my Father are one." In this personal, essential relation, they had neither part nor lot. When He said, "My Father," He said it in a sense that separated Him from every relation of this mortal life.

As a Teacher, Jesus stood alone—separate from the teachers of all times. The people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught with authority, and not as the scribes. The universal verdict was, "Never man spake like this man." In the Sermon on the Mount, He quoted the sayings of men of olden time and set His positive commandment over against and above them. The provisional enactments of Moses were superceded by the fixed principles which He came to declare. The traditions of the elders, the interpretations of scribes and Phari-

sees—these, too, were set aside; and in their place was put His own divine message.

And to emphasize His authority, He made Himself the supreme Arbiter in each case: "I say unto you!" He met every issue in that direct, personal, authoritative way. His word was decisive: it had the judicial tone; it might not be questioned or set at naught. In all such instances, He did not even base His claim upon Scripture, but upon the legitimate exercise of an inherent right. Whether He calmed the sea or cast out devils, cleansed the Temple or taught the people—the method was the same: the I—the self-existent, all-sufficient One—stood forth alone in word and act. Everywhere, He put Himself in God's place. He spake with God's authority, wrought with God's power, moved in God's might: He did it in His own name. As with the authority, so with the honor: no man had a share. In all the ages, no usurper, no autocrat, no tyrant, ever claimed as much as He: He so gentle that little children sought His sweet embrace. It all reminds us of that original creative act, which the Evangelist boldly ascribes to Him: "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

The most marked particular, however, from the Scripture point of view, in which Jesus stands, distinctively alone, alike from sinners and saints, is the absolute sinlessness of His nature as exhibited in His prayers. There is nothing that so reveals character as the thoughts that well up fresh from the soul and are poured out in purest measure at the

throne of grace. Prayer is the autograph of the heart: it writes, in plainest terms, the feelings that are uppermost there. The hypocrite is known by his prayer: so is the man that is truly penitent. The man that stood on the street-corner, so that everyone who came from the four winds could see him—the spirit of that man's prayer was fully manifest. The man who enters his closet and shuts the door, and there prays in secret: that man does not cover his sins, but lays them bare; and he receives the sincere desire of his heart. He who prays in sincerity, prays also in truth.

Jesus was a man of prayer. And His prayer was not only distinct from that of hypocrites: it was separate from that of saints. Abraham took upon him to speak unto the Lord; but in doing so, he Gen. 18: 27. confessed that he was but dust and ashes. Jacob was in sore straits and called upon the name of the Lord; but his humble acknowledgment was, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all Gen. 32: 10. the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant." The Psalms of David overflow with penitence: he makes the general acknowledgment, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall Psalms 130: 3. stand;" while in the greatest of penitential Psalms, he confesses on his own part, "My sin is ever Psalms 51: 3. before me." Daniel set his face unto the Lord to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes; and he made confession for himself and his people, "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and Dan. 9: 5, 7. have rebelled: O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto

thee, but unto us confusion of faces." Simon Peter fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, **Luke 5: 8.** for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The publican smote upon his breast and the cry went up from his **Luke 18: 13.** sin-rent soul, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." The thief on the cross prefaced his plea for mercy with the confession, "We receive the due reward **Luke 23: 41.** of our deeds." And the Church, from the beginning, has made the confession of sins the prerequisite of forgiving grace, "If we say that we **I John 1: 8, 9.** have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us: if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

But Jesus in the face of His own teachings and the example of God's saints in every age: Jesus stood before men with the challenge, "Which of **John 8: 46.** you convinceth me of sin?" In other words, He made Himself the exception of all time. He taught **Matt. 6: 12.** His disciples to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses;" but He nowhere prays, "Forgive me my trespasses:" He did not come under the common Christian rule. He prayed for His enemies, "Father, **Luke 23: 34.** forgive them;" but He nowhere prays, "Father, forgive me." He prayed on the mountains and in the secret place; He prayed before the multitude and in the circle of His disciples: and everywhere He looked the Father in the face, equal, co-eternal, yet distinct—the sinless One. None but He, of equal majesty and glory and might, would venture to lift up his eyes to heaven and utter those sublime words that fell from His lips just before He went forth to

die, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee John 17: 5. before the world was." That were the limit of human self-assurance! It is true, in Gethsemane He cast Himself upon His face, and the cry went up from His agonized soul, "O my Father, if it be Matt. 26: 39. possible, let this cup pass from me;" but there was no acknowledgment of sin: it was the weight of human woe resting upon His heart.

Is there no significance in all this—this separateness, at every point, in the life of Christ? The Scripture declares, "All have sinned and come Rom. 3: 23. short of the glory of God." But here is a man who says, I have not sinned! Here is a man who says, The glory of God is mine! Jesus nowhere makes confession of sin. But He teaches His disciples to pray, "Forgive:" He commends the publican for the penitent acknowledgment of his sinful estate. And He who thus sets Himself apart from sinners and saints—HE says of Himself, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

These are facts in the life of Christ—admitted facts, and there is but one inference to be drawn from them: it is the inference of that disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast, "This is the true God 1 John 5: 20. and eternal Life."

CHAPTER II.

THE SELF-EXISTENT ONE.

A SELF-EXISTENT being is divine. It is not a creature with a dependent life—a life whose beginnings lie in some other life, a life whose support is derived from some outside spring of life: it is a life that subsists of itself, from everlasting to everlasting the same. It is the life of God: it is the life of Christ; for Christ is God. So the Scriptures declare; so the Church teaches; so we believe.

No man has ever claimed self-existence—no one but Jesus Christ. The Christian Scientist may scorn, in a measure, natural processes; but he confesses his inability to live above them. And while he hopes that coming generations, by some sort of evolution, may outgrow the ordinary human agencies, yet he acknowledges that God is the strength of his life. There have been false prophets in all ages; but none ever claimed to reach the point of self-existence: the falseness of their position would have been the more manifest.

A self-existent unit, indivisible and indestructible, which is and which was and which is to come—we mortals know that our nature falls infinitely short of it. And if some man should claim, "I am the self-existent One," we would know at once that some evil blast had swept over his spirit and made shipwreck of his mental part. The thing is so preposterous, so utterly unnatural, that a man would

have to imagine he was God before he could claim to be a self-existent essence. And so, in the whole range of history, no sane man, no prophet false or true, ever set himself up as a being beyond all dependencies, human or divine. That claim is unique in the case of Christ. And that is what makes His case so marvellously significant; that is what makes His life the separated life. He made Himself of no reputation; yet He says in fact, I am the self-existent One.

The whole Gospel History goes upon the presumption that Jesus Christ was the self-existent One: it is implied everywhere. The beloved disciple makes it a theme; and he does so because it was one of the leading themes of his Master. In groping with finite words to express infinite realities, he says, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1: 4. These words can have but one meaning. To say that a man has life—common, natural life, when everyone knows he is alive, is sheer nonsense. But to say that Christ is the life, the source and power of life, is to declare His self-existence—the pre-existent life of all that lives. The same inference is to be drawn from the words of Jesus, when he reproves the Jews for their caviling spirit, "As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." John 5: 26 The same life that is in the Father is in the Son: each has life in Himself. The Father is the self-existent One: the Son has the same self-existence.

But we are not left to mere inference—the mere logic of language: we have the logic of fact. We have the judgment of Jesus expressed in clearest terms; expressed in so many ways and under such varying conditions, that the sum-total is overwhelming in the exactness of the truth He so evidently taught. At the beginning of His ministry, He made that scourge of small cords and drove from the Temple those who engaged in traffic there. And when the Jews demanded a sign to establish His authority for such sweeping measures, this was His answer: “Destroy this temple, and in three
John 2: 19. days I will raise it up.” He spake of the temple of His body. He who called others back to life, came forth from the grave by His own almighty power: death had no dominion over Him; He could not be holden of it. As the self-existent One, He passed by His personal omnipotence through death into life.

This was one of His underlying thoughts when He justified His doctrine before the Jews and declared Himself to be the self-existent, ever-existent
John 8: 58. One, “Before Abraham was, I am!” It was the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses—the name which was expressive of His everlasting attribute. It was a capital crime to usurp that name; but Jesus boldly claimed it. Hence they took up stones to cast at Him: they would carry out, to the letter, the severe sentence of the law.

There is still more explicit evidence. In that beautiful discourse where He calls Himself the Good Shepherd and gives the comforting assurance, “I

lay down my life that I might take it again;” He John 10: 17. puts His declaration beyond all dispute: He makes a claim which declares, without qualification, His self-existence, when He concludes, “I have power John 10: 18 to lay it down and I have power to take it again.” This is God’s “Yea and Amen.” And it is this yea and amen to which the Epistle to the Hebrews testifies, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to- Heb. 13: 8. day, and for ever”—the self-existent One, the ever-existent One.

The self-existence of Christ implies two things, His pre-existence and His post-existence. As to His existence after this life, there is no doubt or denial except on the part of the materialist, who claims that the mind emanates from the body and therefore dies with it. But the mass of humanity, heathen as well as Christian, believes that the life of the soul extends beyond the grave. It is only when much learning, of a certain sort, hath unfixed the pillars of a sane science and hath made men mad along philosophic lines, that reason, like a house divided against itself, totters and tumbles to the dust.

The doctrine of pre-existence, like that of the immortality of the soul, has no religious limit. The sages of old taught it with respect to themselves; while the entire theosophic system, with other Oriental cults, makes it one of its basic principles. But their notion of pre-existence has nothing in common with the claims of Christ. The pre-existence which they taught was the evolution of life through countless incarnations, to end at last in the

total loss of personal existence by absorption into deity: the very reverse of pantheism, which puts God into everything; while this resolves everything into God: thus, in the end, God would be the one all-absorbing essence. But that was not Christ's idea of pre-existence: the pre-existence of Christ is based on His own eternal self-existence, unchanging and unchangeable.

The evidence of Jesus is overwhelming on this point. In that conversation with Nicodemus, He made the astonishing statement, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven"—words which would have no sense if He were mortal like ourselves. This conviction was so positive in Christ's case, that He repeatedly gives expression to the same thought. And the seriousness with which He utters it, the vast soul-interests which He stakes upon it, the earnestness with which He presses it, create a like conviction within our own hearts. As with the Apostles, so with us: we cannot get away from it; we will not part with it: no counter effect of philosophic thought can move us from our faith and the well-founded hope which it inspires.

Hear His words—and who would venture to question His sincerity of heart: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." The disciples of Christ made Him the model of their lives; but not one of them ever made such a claim as Jesus here makes. Peter

was the boldest: he tried to walk on the water as his Master did: but he never said, "I came down from heaven"—he claimed naught beyond poor human nature. What he said and did was in His Master's name.

In like spirit and tone were those perplexing words of Christ, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: As the living Father sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." And when many of His disciples were confounded at these words and said, "This is an hard saying, who can hear it?" Jesus answered, "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" And in that sharp dispute with the Pharisees, He said, "If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me." And so we believe as St. John believed when the Holy Ghost brought Jesus' words to his remembrance, "He was come from God, and went to God."

The same confident tone runs through all the declarations of Christ: a perfect agreement marks His utterances. He states His position; He stands by it; He stakes all upon it. In that last discourse, He sets forth the completed round of His eternal existence, "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father." The disciples understood it, and they said, "We believe that thou camest forth from God!" And when He had thus brought them to the confession of their faith in Him as the pre-existent

One, He had accomplished His present purpose: He had brought them to the point from which they had a clear vision of the eternity of His being; and they were now prepared to be witnesses of the divinity of His nature as well as of the perfect humanity of His life. He could say of the work already performed in their hearts—the work of conviction as to His Person, “It is finished:” nothing remained but the great sacrificial act.

There is one more scene—the most sublime in all His life before He went forth to die. It was that solemn hour when nature slept: the midnight hush was brooding over earth—poor sin-stained earth. The faithful band drew close about their Master: the last word, “I have overcome,” was echoing in their hearts. A solemn stillness then: who but He would dare to break it! It was no earth-scene—it was all divine: the Father on the throne, the Son at the footstool. And as He lifted up His eyes to heaven, thus he prayed, “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” And then there welled up from His heart that wondrous prayer, the most sublime that ever rose as incense to the skies. And among its most sublime utterances were words like these, “And now, O

John 17: 5, 6, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self,

8.

with the glory which I had with thee before the world was: I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me: I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came

out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." Is it possible that men can see in these words nothing but sweet sentiment—the poesy of speech! Is it possible that any man, with the love of God in his heart, can read this High-priest prayer, and not be convinced of the divinity of Christ!

It is written of John the Baptist that he was filled with the Holy Ghost. John's witness, therefore, should carry weight: "This was he of whom I John 1: 15. spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for He was before me." It is an admitted fact that John was born before Jesus. There is, therefore, but one interpretation to these words: John refers to Jesus' pre-existence. And this becomes the more evident when he says elsewhere, "He that cometh from above is above John 3: 31. all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all." And John spake these words to draw the contrast between himself and Christ: he spake them when his disciples came with the message that all men had gone after Christ; and he met them with that statement which marks his humility, "He must increase, but I must decrease." The man of humble heart acknowledges Christ: the man puffed up with intellectual pride, denies Him.

The Apostle Paul—he that was born out of due time—makes the pre-existence of Christ, directly or indirectly, his constant theme. The first specific reference dates back to the wilderness life. He tells

how the Israelites were under the cloud and passed through the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink. And then comes the statement that is marvellous in the extreme—one that should silence forever all dispute, “For they drank of that spiritual Rock

I Cor. 10: 4. that followed them; and that Rock was Christ.”

He speaks in like tone when he has the Resurrection for his theme, “The first man is of the earth

I Cor. 15: 47. earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.”

Adam had no pre-existence—he was a creature of earth: Christ had a pre-existence—He is the Lord from heaven. Such is St. Paul’s vision of the eternal existence of Christ. And when he would picture the self-sacrifice of that devoted life, so that the people to whom he wrote might be stirred to liberality of heart, he adds intensity to his plea when he says, “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus

II Cor. 8: 9. Christ that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” And elsewhere it is stated that

God’s purpose and grace were “given us in Christ

II Tim. 1: 9,10 Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.” It was purposed in Christ there; it was performed in Christ here: the same Christ—there and here.

It is upon this cumulative testimony that we believe Jesus when He says, “Before Abraham was, I am”—the eternal, self-existent One. And it is these facts that give force to His question when He asks

the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ: whose son is he?" And when they confess that He is the Son of David, then comes that question which they could not answer, "How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord?" "If David call him Lord, how Matt. 22: 41-44 is he his son?" And the Pharisees of to-day are dumb before that question: they cannot answer it. It is only when we acknowledge Him to be "The Root and Offspring of David," that we can know Him to be at once both David's Lord and David's Son—God and Man: "God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man The Athanasian Creed. of the substance of His mother, born in the world." This is plain speech: this is no proverb. If we are truly His disciples, we understand it: if we are truly His disciples, we believe and confess it.

The eternal existence of Christ, therefore, is the evident teaching of Scripture. Our Lord everywhere claimed it: His disciples everywhere built upon it: the Church everywhere confesses it. Let us not be deceived by vain philosophies: let us not be turned aside from the faith once delivered to the saints. Let us stake all, if need be, upon the truth and promise of Christ, "I came forth from the John 16: 28 Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father."

CHAPTER III.

PROPHECIES AND PROMISES.

THE spirit of prophecy is not a common human gift: it does not belong to the sphere of finite life; it is, in no proper sense, a part of it. There is the logic of events—the signs of the times. The man of a wise and an understanding heart may be able to point out probabilities; and history may substantiate the correctness of his judgment. But that is not prophecy: it is but the foresight and insight of consistent thought: the spirit of prophecy is not there.

The prophetic spirit is the direct impulse of God: **II Peter 1:21.** “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” The prophet could say—and no other man can say it except in a secondary sense, **II Sam. 23:2.** “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” The prophet never spoke in his own name: “Thus saith the Lord,” was his invariable acknowledgment. It is only in a mediate sense, therefore, that the minister of Christ may use the prophetic tongue: and even then he speaks in Jesus’ name.

But when Jesus stood up in the synagogue and read from the Book of Prophecy, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;” He closed the book and said, **Luke 4: 18, 21** “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” It was a strong claim that He made. No wonder the people rose up in wrath, and thrust Him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which

the city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. He had spoken blasphemies—unless He were, indeed, that prophet, the promised Christ. If, therefore, the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, it was not a lying spirit: it was the Spirit of truth. And so His prophecies and promises were words of truth.

A threefold office marks the ministry of Christ: He is our Prophet, Priest and King. It is the prophetic office, the prophesying part of it, which we shall now examine. And as prophecy was followed by fulfilment, in all cases where fulfilment pertained to our past, we have the positive proof that He was gifted with the prophetic spirit; the proof, too, that it was inherent in His nature, since He exercised it in His own name.

Many of His prophecies were given to comfort His disciples; to fill them with courage in the dark hour when all seemed lost; and, at the same time, to settle their faith in Him as God come down to save. And so, when He told them that He was about to return to the Father who had sent Him, and gave them the promise of the Holy Ghost, He said, “And now, I have told you before it come to pass, that, John 14: 29. when it is come to pass, ye might believe.” The prince of this world was come; the power of darkness would triumph: the disciples needed some such assurance to keep them steadfast until the calamities were overpast and their eyes should meet the glories of the resurrection light.

The prophetic word was spoken, sometimes, to

meet the cavilings of His enemies, but chiefly for the comfort and encouragement of His disciples. An instance of the former is furnished us when the scribes and Pharisees came to Him and said, "Master, we would see a sign from thee." He reproved them as an evil generation; and then came the answer, "There shall no sign be given to it, but Matt. 12: 38-40 the sign of the prophet Jonas; For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." There is but one interpretation to be put upon these words: They were a prophecy of His rest in the grave.

The prophecies in which we are especially interested are those that pertain to the closing scenes of His earthly life. They are definite; they are minute; they cannot, by argument or inference, be set aside. When Simon Peter gave the keynote that has been sounded through the Church in all ages, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" the record is that "From that time forth, began Jesus to show Matt. 16: 21. unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." And as He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, He charged the chosen three, Matt. 17: 9. "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." While they were up in Galilee, His words were more specific, "The Son Matt. 17: 22, 23 of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men; and they shall kill him; and the third day he shall be

raised again." As the time drew near, the account goes more into special incidents, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be Matt.20: 18, 19 betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify; and the third day he shall rise again." After he spake the parable of the last judgment, He said to His disciples, "Ye know that after two Matt. 26: 2. days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified." And as they went out to the Mount of Olives, He finds the fulfilment of the words of the prophet, "I will smite the Shep- Matt.26: 31, 32 herd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." And then follows His own prophetic promise, "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

A remarkable series of prophecies are grouped here. They begin with the bare announcement of His sufferings, death, and resurrection. The betrayal is next added, and the length of time He will rest in the grave. The acts of the chief priests and scribes now enter into the account, with the mocking and scourging and crucifying on the part of the Gentiles. At the Passover Feast, He points out the one who shall betray Him: and on the way to Olives, He announces the fact that He will go before His disciples into Galilee, and that He will meet them there. And all this was fulfilled to the letter: everything came to pass absolutely as He had prefigured it.

There are other prophecies which merit at least a passing notice. When His disciples pointed with

pride to the Temple, Jesus said, " Verily I say unto
 Matt. 24: 2. you, there shall not be left here one stone upon
 another, that shall not be thrown down." And then
 follows that terrible picture, when the abomination
 of desolation shall stand in the Holy Place. On
 the Triumphal March, as He drew near the city, He
 wept over it, saying, " If thou hadst known, even
 Luke 19: 41-44. thou, at least in this thy day the things that belong
 unto thy peace: but now they are hid from thine
 eyes." And then, with prophetic view, He sees the
 enemy close in upon the city—casting a trench
 round about it, compassing and keeping it on every
 side: and finally the battering down of its mighty
 walls, and the terrible carnage that followed—the
 like, not from that day to this, no, nor ever shall be.
 How soon—less than forty years—this prophecy
 had its awful fulfilment! And when He spoke,
 there was no sign of it: it was a prophecy, not only
 of the improbable, but of the apparently impossible.

There are prophecies yet to be fulfilled: the
 prophecies with respect to the second Advent. The
 prophecy that the sun shall be darkened and the
 Matt. 24: 29-31. moon shall not give her light; the prophecy that
 the Son of Man shall come in the clouds of heaven,
 with power and great glory; the prophecy that He
 shall send His angels with a great sound of a trum-
 pet, and they shall gather together His elect from
 Matt. 25: 31-46. the four winds; the prophecy of judgment and
 rewards based upon it: these are yet to come. And
 we are certain that they shall take place, because He
 who spake these prophecies is the One who is and
 who was and who is to come: the eternal ages are

ever-present to His eyes. He who sits in heavenly places and who speaks from the very throne, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am Rev. 1: 18. alive for evermore:" He is the omniscient One as well as the ever-existent One. Time and eternity stand open to His view: His prophecies spoken in His own name are proof of it. He does not say, "Thus saith the Lord:" He says, "I say unto you." The denial of His prophetic gift would lead to the denial of every Scripture statement: it would transform the Bible into a dead sea of fable, with neither life nor the possibility of life in it.

If we turn to the promises of Christ, the same almightiness lies back of every one of them: promises which have a prophetic side; promises which reach into the eternal world for their fulfilment. He promised His disciples that they should sit on twelve thrones; and that those who had forsaken all for His name's sake, should receive an hundredfold, Matt. 19: 28, 29. and inherit everlasting life. An everlasting promise must find its fulfilment in an everlasting God: it can find it only in Him whose name is above every name. Put this promise on human lips, and the folly of it becomes apparent. But when Jesus speaks, the soul is filled with the sublimest trust as to the fulfilment of every jot and tittle.

Jesus forewarned His disciples as to the many calamities that should come: false Christs should arise; nation should be arrayed against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there should be earthquakes and famines and pestilences. And then came

the prophecy with the promise, " But before all these, **Luke 21: 12-15** they shall lay hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." Read the Acts of the Apostles, and find the verification of this prophecy and promise written on almost every page. And what a promise! Who but God would make it? Who but God could fulfil it? " I will give you a mouth and wisdom:" I whom they shall crucify; I who shall rise again; I who shall ascend into heaven; I, from my throne there, " will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." And these men went forth, suffering for Christ's sake. And Christ sent His Spirit to strengthen their hearts and inspire their thoughts, so that they could endure the stripes and answer the charges of their enemies.

As they sat at that last Supper, where the hand of the betrayer had been with Him on the table, Jesus spake those words of praise, " Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations." And then He renewed the promise, " I appoint unto you **Luke 22: 28-30** a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The scene is too solemn for words without weight: there was the profoundest reality there. It was just before He went forth to Geth-

semane: it was no time to speak in trifling tone. It was a transfiguration of spirit: the throne, the judgment, with their glory and might, were set before His eyes! These were certitudes in His sight; their fulfilment would come according to God's eternal decree; the purpose of the eternities of the past would have its consummation in the eternities to come. Here, as everywhere, the plan of God moves from everlasting to everlasting.

In that comforting discourse on the same night, there is a twofold promise, "He that believeth on John 14: 12, 16 me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father: And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." The promise of the Comforter was wondrously fulfilled on the day of Pentecost; while miracle after miracle attested the truth of Christ's promise—in particular, those marvellous miracles of grace. These promises have nothing in common with the things that men pledge: they are beyond all human range. They are within God's sphere—no man may enter there. But Christ makes these promises in His own name; and their fulfilment is the evidence that He had the right to make them and the almightiness to perform them. They point to the divinity of His nature: nay more, they establish it.

And in the end, He gave the promise, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come Acts 1: 8. upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and

unto the uttermost part of the earth." And why should they witness to Him? And what should be their testimony? We find it in the Acts of the Apostles, as well as in their Epistles. They preached Jesus and the Resurrection—His literal coming forth from the grave. They preached the remission of sins, and life and salvation by His name. They proclaimed Him to be the God of truth and grace. The sum and substance of their teaching as to the person of Christ, are embraced in the words of the beloved disciple, "This is the true God and eternal Life."

The prophecies and promises of Christ: whence could they spring but from Him whose words are spirit and life: whence but from Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? At the well of Samaria, the woman confessed, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet:" and she acknowledged Him to be the Christ. And when we read His prophecies and dwell upon His promises, we realize that their proclamation belongs to the sphere of God's wisdom and their fulfilment to the realm of God's might. And as Jesus promised in His own name, and fulfilled according to His promise, His Godhead is established by the many infallible proofs of Scripture, whose truth is settled both by outward evidence and by inward effect.

God is the source of all life: the everlasting life is antecedent to all other life. There is but one infinite, self-determining Agent: there is but one infinite Essence. Jesus assumed it everywhere: He

declared it in word; He proved it by deed: He is the everlasting One. He justified, in all His earthly life, the prophetic name that was applied before His advent, "Emmanuel, God with us." As God with us, the Everlasting One, time was to Him like the swing of the pendulum in the eternal age—an open incident. It all stood plainly before His eyes. Prophecy, therefore, was the essential outcome of His everlasting attribute—a natural part of it. In like manner, His promises are linked to the perfections of His nature—love, truth, might, in infinite measure. Here is the Christian's comfort: here the Christian's hope. The little while of life's dark night will soon be past: we shall see Him once more—no longer by faith but by sight. We shall see Him and our hearts shall rejoice; and our joy no man shall take from us.

CHAPTER IV.

OMNIPOTENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE.

THE sphere of the infinite is God's sphere. He shares the honor with none; for there are none with whom to share it—it exceeds the limits of mortal life. A superhuman act presupposes a superhuman power to perform it. If a man speaks a prophecy in God's name, it is the omniscient God that enables him to speak it. If he works a miracle in God's name, the omnipotent God enables him to do it. Infinitudes must have an infinite source: the diameter always reaches the circumference; it never goes beyond it. The circumference of human might is finite: the diameter cannot be infinite.

The New Testament declares the omnipotence of Christ. It is implied in the name Emmanuel—God with us: it is confidently affirmed by the Evangelists and Apostles: it is claimed and exhibited by Christ Himself in word and act. The so-called Synoptic Gospels—the three whose combined accounts present a harmonized history of Christ, begin with the needs of His human nature: the Gospel according to St. John begins with the omnipotence of His divine nature. “The Word was God,” is the sublime declaration of the beloved disciple. And then to make assurance doubly sure, he startles us by the sweeping statement, “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.” This is final for every true disciple of

John 1: 3.

Christ: it finds a ready response in his heart. It settles the issue: there is no escape from it.

And how do men try to escape this positive declaration of the Apostle? They do not attempt to untie the knot: they cut it. They play the Jewish role: for, in the main, they are Judaistic Gentiles. The Jews had agreed that if any man should confess Jesus to be the Christ, he should be put out of the Synagogue: they would make short work of it. And those who deny the divinity of Christ, have unwittingly agreed that every book of the New Testament—or any part of it—which ascribes to Christ the divine attributes: that book, or that part of it, must be put out of the Bible. Nothing will be suffered to remain that conflicts with their philosophies. What a veritable scrap-book their Bible must be!

The beloved disciple had sufficient guarantee for the statement he makes. He had heard it from His Master—not once, but time upon time. He begins with the testimony of John the Baptist, “The John 3: 35. Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.” If His hands were human, how could they hold all things? What empty words are these, if His hands were like yours and mine! Poor clods of earth, how could they hold the universe? As man stands at the center of human might, his finger-tips scarce touch the border-line of space: but the hands of Jesus reach out into the universe and gather, in His almighty grasp, the worlds and all that dwell therein. Let weak men of this weak

age deny as they please; John's estimate of Christ is settled beyond all doubt: he identifies Him with the omnipotent One, "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." The nations are but a drop in the bucket; they are counted as the small dust in the balance: how infinitesimally small must Christ's critics be in His sight!

Infinitude is stamped upon everything that Christ touches. A few references are sufficient to indicate it. He knew "that the Father had given all things into his hands;" for "He was come from God and went to God." Upon this certain knowledge, and the assurance of it, is based the promise which is expressed without limit, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do:" "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." And then to show the source of His omnipotence and to inspire faith as to its exercise, He declares His sovereign sway, "All things that the Father hath are mine."

And this is that Jesus, the truth and integrity of whose life men pretend to admire, while they deny the integrity and truth of His promise! They would make us believe that the same fountain sends out waters both bitter and sweet. They draw the line: whatever is on the side of the possibilities of human life, they accept; whatever goes out into the region of the divine, they reject. Who made them a judge and a divider of the inspired Word?

What arrogance—to split sentences, and adopt the one part and discard the other at pleasure! But that is what the modern critic does, to his everlasting confusion and shame—a stumbling-block to the blind, and the halt, and the lame.

The prayer of Jesus, just before He went over to Gethsemane, touches almost every attribute of the divine life. It was a solemn moment: His heart went out to the Father, and truth was His theme. The sublime sentiments which the Evangelist attributes to Christ, are not of human source: they are far above the power of human thought. There is an infinite majesty as He stands there; and His words deal with infinitudes: “Father, the hour John 17: 1, 2. is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.” The One who has power over all flesh; the One who gives eternal life:—that is God’s power; it is God’s gift: it belongs to none else. But Christ claims it as His peculiar power and gift. Admit the claim; then Christ is God! And He but emphasizes this truth when He further declares, “All mine are thine, and thine are John 17: 10. mine.”

The same almightiness marks His commission to His disciples. He called the Twelve together and sent them forth two by two; and He “gave them Luke 9: 1. power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.” And in His commission to the Seventy, He added this specific promise, “Behold, I give

Luke 10: 19. unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

After His resurrection, He committed to the Apostles a spiritual power that is altogether divine: He breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." And when He gave them their final commission, He based its authority upon an inherent right, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" while in the commandment which follows, He declares the doctrine of the Trinity and His own personal equality there: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Thus the Evangelists laid the foundation-stone, upon which the early Church built its confession as to the Person of Christ, "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God:" a truth which is everywhere implied in the declarations of His Human-divine Omnipotence.

The Nicene
Creed.

The Epistles are equally emphatic on this point. It is no human attribute that St. Paul assigns to Jesus when he writes, "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." God the Father the originating source; God the Son the mediating

source; while, in proper place, the Apostle speaks of God the Holy Ghost as the applying source.

St. Paul sets it forth as his special appointment to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of Eph. 3: 9. the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." And that we may be assured that Jesus Christ was not some specially endowed angelic servant to whom was committed the creative act, he elsewhere strips the case of all possible doubt, "For by him were all things created, that Col. 1: 16, 17. are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." This can be affirmed of no creature: God alone is before all things; by Him alone all things consist. And yet, this is affirmed of Christ.

The Epistle to the Hebrews presents the same claim. It says that God made the worlds by Him; and that He upholds all things by the word of Heb. 1: 2, 3. His power. And so the omnipotence of God is everywhere manifest in the offices of Christ.

The omnipotence of Jesus—what undoubted evidence of it He gave in the presence of the dead! He took the little maid by the hand, and she Matt. 9: 18-26. arose. When He met the funeral train outside the city gate, His voice of command sounded in the depths of the realm of the dead, "Young man, Luke 7: 11-15.

I say unto thee arise!" And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And when He came to the tomb at Bethany, He cried with a loud voice, John 11:43,44 "Lazarus, come forth!" And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot.

These omnipotent acts prove the truth of what Jesus taught. He had made the claim, "As the John 5:21. Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Then comes that claim to almightiness which reaches beyond the confines of time and settles the eternal John 5:25. issue, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." It would seem that some who heard these words were struck with profound amazement. And so, Jesus sweeps past the centuries of time and draws them to the very bar of the last great day: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming John 5:28,29. in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." The Epistles everywhere picture the same profound scene.

The omnipotence of Christ implies His omnipresence: for where His power is, there His presence must be. If we are satisfied as to His omnipotence, we shall be equally sure as to His omnipresence. In short, the infinitude of one attribute implies and involves the infinitude of

every other possible attribute. The all-seeing One is the all-present One: the all-present One is the all-knowing One: the all-knowing One is the all-wise One. The divine attributes are interlocked and the key is in God's keeping: no materialist, no atheist, no rationalist, can wrest it from His almighty hand.

We are not left, however, to the cold logic of the case: we have the direct testimony of Christ. He said to Nicodemus, "No man hath ascended up John 3: 13. to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." Mark that scene. It is in the depth of the night. A great ruler of the Jews approaches Jesus and acknowledges Him to be a teacher sent from God: he further acknowledges Christ's miracles as a proof of it. And then Jesus fills his soul with amazement as He says, in fact, "I came down from heaven; I ascend into heaven: even while I am talking with you, I the Son of Man am in heaven!" He declares His Human-divine omnipresence, pure and simple.

It was a comforting assurance that He gave His disciples, "Where two or three are gathered Matt. 18: 20. together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And when He told them that they should teach men to observe all things that He had commanded them, just before He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight, He gave the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto Matt. 28: 20. the end of the world." And upon that promise, "they went forth and preached everywhere, the Mark 16: 20. Lord working with them, and confirming the Word

with signs following." What these signs were, we learn from the Acts of the Apostles.

The omnipotence and omnipresence of Christ: they are affirmed on all proper occasions by Christ and His disciples; they are implied on every page of the New Testament. If every chapter in which Jesus manifested these divine attributes was torn out of the Gospel accounts, there would scarcely be a single one left. The destructive work of those who deny the divinity of Christ, reaches farther than they would openly admit or than men commonly suspect. If they could succeed in tearing up the foundation stones of the Gospel of Christ, the devastation would be as complete as when the Romans laid waste the Holy City: not one stone would be left in its original place: the wreck of the ages would have come—the souls of our loved ones buried beneath the broken-down walls of what was once the Church of Christ! But such shall not be: for the promise is, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

And that we may not fall in this siege nor be captured by the artful foe, let the Word of God dwell richly in our hearts, and let us earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Let us go as far as did the Apostles. If any man comes and brings another Gospel, let us not bid him

11 John 10. God speed; let us not receive him into our houses: let us rather turn upon him as Paul turned upon that sorcerer who sought to draw the deputy from the faith: "O full of all subtlety and all

mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord!" Eternal interests are at stake: we dare not be silent; we dare not compromise; we dare not suffer anyone to stand between our souls and their salvation by Christ. We must be true to God's truth and promise; we must be true to the conviction of our hearts. Acts 13: 10.

And true to God's truth, true to the conviction which it inspires, we shall be true to truth wherever we find it. We shall not take the narrow view of the disciple: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us." We shall honor truth as Jesus honored it. At the same time, we shall be as unbending as was He. With His truth in hand and heart, we shall say as He said, "He that is not with me is against me." Where men are with Christ, we are with them in Christ. Where men depart from Christ, we must depart from them: we cannot leave Christ. That were death—spiritual death—to leave Him who is the life of our life. Luke 9: 49.
Matt. 12: 80.

CHAPTER V.

SPECIAL EXERCISE OF DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

THE Scriptures tell us that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. The Psalmist had a profound conception of this marvellous truth. He pictures man as shrinking from the divine presence, and thus concludes, "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me: The darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Men cannot flee from His presence—and they know it. The heart of man confesses, "Thou God seest me." The Lord reveals Himself as the searcher of hearts.

The secrets of men's hearts, the impulses moving there—to know these is no common gift. To move along spiritual lines, with spiritual knowledge and spiritual effect—the natural and visible and physical completely set aside: that is God's sphere; it is too high for human attainment. It may be admitted that here and there are abnormal developments, with results that baffle the wise and the prudent; but these results, wonderful as they may be, are void of all benefit: they lack power proportioned to the seeming gift. They are like the enchantments of Egypt: the rods of the sorcerers became serpents; but Aaron's rod swallowed their rods. All modern enchantment is as powerless as was that of ancient time. It is mere exhibition: it does not act. It belongs to the stage: it has

nothing in common with the serious realities of life.

It is a marvellous fact that John did no miracle; although his ministry was, in part, co-incident with that of Christ. He spoke plain facts; he gave expression to the profoundest mysteries; he claimed special revelation along Messianic lines. And yet, throughout, he kept within the limits of human thought and act. At most, he was a prophet, with scarcely a display of the prophetic gift. The Bible critic tries to tell us that the age of Christ was one of superstitious awe; that every little mystified act was magnified into a miracle. The ministry of John proves the falsity and unfoundedness of such a charge, as well as the shallow thought of those who make it. It is all swept aside by that one little statement, "John did no miracle."

As soon, however, as Jesus comes upon the scene, the case is altogether different. Here the miraculous preponderates: thought, speech, act—each has the mark of miracle upon it. There must be some solid reason for this broad distinction between His ministry and that of the Baptist. They lived in the same age; they ministered to the same class of people; they had, in large part, the same message. And yet, John did no miracle, while the ministry of Christ is crowded with miracles. Why this world-wide difference? There is but one answer—it is the answer of Scripture: John was human; Jesus was human and divine.

The divinity of Jesus is manifest in the way He

read men's thoughts. And His power to read men's thoughts is not pushed to the front by the Evangelists in order to bolster up the theory that He was divine—an afterthought, as it were, on their part. In each instance, it comes into play in the simple straightforward recital of some life incident. At Capernaum, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy. And Jesus saw their faith! He saw, not merely the faith as exhibited by their act; but the faith in their hearts. It was a miracle of sight, this seeing the invisible thought. And when He saw their faith, He said to the sick man, "Thy sins Luke 5: 17-26 are forgiven thee." The scribes and Pharisees were shocked at such an utterance. And they reasoned in themselves, "Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And then comes the remarkable record that Jesus perceived their thoughts and said, "What reason ye in your hearts?" He thus makes the open claim that He reads the thoughts of men's hearts: and He adds such outward effects as to prove the truth of His claim and demonstrate that His nature is divine. No other inference can be drawn from the entire incident; for everything else is on the scale of God's infinite wisdom and might.

After Jesus had taught the Pharisees, by an apt illustration, that the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath—a very strong claim in view of the fact that God alone is Lord of the Law which He gave to Moses on the Mount: after making this claim, He came into conflict with them as to the special duties and demands of the sacred day. As

He taught in the synagogue, there was a man there with a withered hand. The Pharisees watched Him whether He would heal on the Sabbath: they wanted to find a ground of accusation against Him. But Jesus knew their thoughts; and calling the man into the midst, He asked, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath Luke 6: 7-9. days to do good or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" And He took the man and healed him. He did not guess at these men's thoughts: their thoughts were as open to Him as visible acts. It was by the almightiness of His nature that He looked into their hearts.

The case of the woman who stood at Jesus' feet, and washed them with her tears, and anointed them with ointment, is practically the same. Here the Pharisee set the standard; and Jesus met it. The Pharisee had said, "This man, if he were a Luke 7: 39-50 prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." And then, by a parable with its pointed application, Jesus showed that He understood the case and thus proved Himself at least a prophet; while in His declaration of pardon, He openly proclaimed Himself to be divine. On His own authority, He said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee: thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." No man may speak such words in his own name: they may come from God alone, or from him whom God appoints.

When the disciples reasoned among themselves as to which should be the greatest, Jesus perceived the thoughts of their hearts; and to teach the lesson

Luke 9: 46, 47 of humble service, He set a little child in their midst. The Evangelist declares that Jesus "needed John 2: 24, 25 not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man." In short, throughout, He claims to know the secrets of men's hearts; while His disciples, wherever they touch upon the subject, acknowledge that He has the power to read men's thoughts. But this is God's province, and God's alone: Jesus, therefore, proves His Godhead by the direct personal exercise of this divine attribute. He declares His divinity by doing on His own authority and in His own name that which is absolutely divine.

The Sermon on the Mount was a revelation of the divine: "The people were astonished at his Matt. 7: 28, 29. doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The authoritative tone was everywhere manifest. He set His word over against the teachings of old time: He set His acts over against the doings of old time. When He cleansed the Temple, He said, "Take these things hence:" it was the exercise of an inherent right. When He healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead: it was the Master's voice that spake. It was one of those scenes of amazement that led the people to question among themselves, "What thing is this? for with authority Mark 1: 27. commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." And well might they wonder; for He performed almighty acts in His own almighty name: His authority was His own almighty right.

The method of Christ stands in such striking contrast to that of His disciples! In the days of their pupilage, they had, indeed, been ambitious for power and place: and more than once they were severely rebuked for it. But after the day of Pentecost, they went everywhere working miracles in Christ's name. When Peter healed that lame man at the Temple-gate, he said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Acts 3: 6. And when he was examined as to the means by which the man was made whole, Peter steadfastly replied, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, doth this man stand here before you whole." He said to Aeneas, "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole;" and the palsied man arose. And when Dorcas died, not until he had kneeled down and prayed, did he turn to the body and say, "Tabitha, arise." Acts 9: 33-40. All the cures that the Apostles wrought, were performed upon Jesus' authority and in reliance on Jesus' healing gift.

The Apostles were commissioned by Christ to preach repentance and remission of sins in His name. And so they made the universal demand, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved:" "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus." Acts 2: 38. They preached Christ; they baptized in the name of Christ; they pleaded for the sake of Christ. In the opening sentences of their letters, they proclaim themselves the servants of Christ: at the close, they commend those whom they address to the grace of Christ. They each could say, as did St. Paul to the Church at Corinth, "I determined not to know anything among you, save I Cor. 2: 2.

Jesus Christ." To them, Christ was all in all, God over all blessed for ever.

Jesus preached in His own name; He performed miracles in His own name: He did it because His name is above every name. Is there no significance here? Was the meek and lowly Jesus so self-centered that He put Himself in the divine place—exalting Himself beyond degree! And were His disciples so completely swayed by His daring art, that His word became the unchanging law of their life! "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven:" was that hallucination on His part? And were they duped into the idea that He had power and authority to carry such a promise into effect? Such questions need no answer: they show the utter folly of denying the divinity of Christ. The denial of His eternal Godhead involves the denial of almost every passage of Scripture that deals directly with His life.

A specially distinctive feature in the ministry of Christ, is His treatment of the inner sickness of sin, as well as its outward effects. "Thy sins be forgiven thee:" thus He spake to the man sick of the palsy. And when they charged Him with blasphemy, He set before them the alternative, "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?" In the case of men, they would be equally impossible: in the case of God, they would be equally possible. The outward healing would be the evidence of the inward

cure. And as God alone could effect the bodily cure; so He alone might declare the cleansing of the heart. The challenge of the scribes is a challenge to the divinity of Christ. And Christ meets their challenge: He proves His divinity when He says to the sick of the palsy, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." By this, they were to know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins. These scribes had said, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" They set that as the absolute condition: and they were right. And now that Jesus demonstrated His power to forgive sins, by making the man every whit whole, He demonstrated also that He is God. There is no way to set aside this evident fact, except to deny the Scripture account of it. Nothing but blank infidelity drives to such a resort.

This is not the only instance in which Christ forgave sins in His own name. In the case of that sinful woman who wept at His feet, He said, "Thy sins are forgiven." And when they that sat at meat with Him began to murmur and say within themselves, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" He answered them by saying to the woman, "Thy Luke 7: 47-50. faith hath saved thee; go in peace." It was not for them to meddle with His divine right.

He not only exercised in His own name the office of God to forgive sins: He commissioned His disciples to do the same: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever John 20: 22, 23 sins ye retain, they are retained." No one but God can delegate an authority that God alone possesses.

St. Paul recognizes this as the special power and province of God and His Anointed. To the Church at Ephesus he says, “Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” And these words find their counterpart in His letter to the Colossians, when he writes, “Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” God forgives: Christ forgives: God for Christ’s sake forgives. What utter contradiction here, unless Christ is God. That was St. John’s judgment, a judgment inspired by the Holy Ghost: “The Word was God.”

These are special marks of the divine nature of Christ: they are taken from incidental cases—from cases in which some other quality comes into prominence, and without which we would be compelled to look for these attributes to some other source. And that fact adds to their evidential value. There is no effort, on the part of the Evangelists, to emphasize Christ’s exercise of divine prerogative: they have quite a different purpose in view. And yet, they state facts which make this truth the more evident. The accounts are not given to show that Jesus could read thoughts; that He exercised an authority which was wholly divine; or that He had power on earth to forgive sins: that was not the point. The accounts are given to record the wonderful works of Christ; and the exhibition of divine right, as well as the assertion of it, was made necessary because His enemies had tried to set Him forth as a blasphemer and thus break His influence

with the people. And so, He was compelled to speak and act in self-defence: it was another instance of the manner in which God causes the wrath of man to praise Him.

As we look upon these instances of the special exercise of divine attributes, the conviction becomes irresistible that Jesus Christ was none but God manifest in the flesh. It was prophesied of Him as plainly as prophecy could make it: it was announced at His birth as a glorious fact: it was proclaimed at His baptism by a voice from the throne: it was recorded by the Evangelists on every page they wrote: it has been confessed by the great body of Christian believers in every succeeding age. Let us hold fast the form of sound words—the universal expression of God's people since the Day of Pentecost: “The Holy Church throughout all the world, doth acknowledge Thee, O Christ.”

The Te
Deum.

CHAPTER VI.

SPECIAL CLAIMS AND ACTS.

IF a man makes an unusual claim—something that requires exceptional gifts, or is outside the common human range, or exceeds the authority of our common life—we question at once his ability or right to do it. It is true, men are easily drawn aside by vain conceits. It is a part of our nature to have a sort of superstitious awe for the incomprehensible: for what is superstition but the prostitution of the universal religious sense? And yet, men of sober thought demand a reason for every claim that transcends the privilege or power of the masses. It is well that such is the case; for without that sense of just balancing between cause and effect, between an inherent right and its legitimate exercise: without such a sense, there would be impositions and usurpations without number or name.

And so when Jesus cleansed the Temple with that scathing rebuke, “My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves;” the chief priests and elders of the people did not exceed their rights when they demanded, “By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?” The question was a proper one; but an evil purpose inspired it: hence the dilemma in which Jesus left them. He never failed to answer the true question of the heart, and to answer it to the heart’s comfort and peace. The

Temple was his Father's House; and as the Son of God, He had authority to drive out those who defiled it.

The special claims and acts of Christ abound everywhere—on every page the Evangelists wrote. And as we read them, we are impressed with one fact: They were not written for passing effect; they were written to give a plain account of His words and deeds. That intensifies their value as evidence of His divine nature. If these things were set up as arguments, they would lose much of their force: in fact, their evidential value would be lost. But coming, as they do, in the natural ongoing of events, they can be relied upon as actual historical occurrences, and valid proofs of the transcendent character of Christ.

It is one of the plainest facts of Scripture that the words of Christ would be blasphemous in the extreme, or the very essence of presumption and nonsense, unless He is divine. That was the repeated charge against Him. And by divine, I do not simply mean Godlike; but God in very truth and essence. Let us now notice a few special claims which no one but God may make in his own name: they are overwhelming in nature and force.

When Nathanael was brought to Jesus and came to realize, by the statement of Christ, that His was the all-seeing eye, he made that unqualified acknowledgment, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." It was but slight testimony that caused Nathanael to confess Christ—some little

incident under the figtree. It was enough, however, to create a conviction and cause him to declare it. In recognition of this fact, Jesus said, "Thou shalt

John 1: 48-51. see greater things than these: Hereafter, ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." The folly of such words on mere mortal lips—the utter folly of it! How would they sound from this pulpit, if I were to repeat them in my own name? But when Jesus speaks them, something within us whispers, "Be still, and know that I am God."

The scene at the well of Samaria is one of the most remarkable in the history of Christ. The woman recognized Him as a prophet. And then, when she saw in His words the marks of the promised Christ, Jesus openly declared, "I that
John 4: 25, 26. speak unto thee am he." Who but a fanatic ever claimed to be the Christ? Who, but one that aimed to deceive the people? But Jesus claimed it. And even they who deny that He was divine, are compelled to confess that His character was a perfect one, His nature pure: in short, they even confess with the prophet, "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth."

There is a tone of divine authority when Jesus commissions the twelve Apostles: the voice of God sounds in His utterances there. Is not the divine element most fully manifest when He says, "Who-
Matt. 10: 32 33 soever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven: but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Confess what? or what deny? What

could it be but that He is the Christ—in Himself and of Himself divine.

In the same connection, He puts Himself in like divine place: "He that loveth father or mother Matt. 10: 37. more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." The highest human claim is the claim of home: no authority, no principality, no power, may supplant it. But Jesus steps in between the heart of parent and child, and demands the first place. That is God's province and God's alone: no one but a false prophet would usurp it.

The claim of superiority, of supreme authority, of divine right: the words and works of Christ everywhere declare it. If "the Son of Man is Lord Matt. 12: 8, even of the Sabbath," He is Lord of all time. He was greater than Solomon; He was greater than Luke 11: 31,32 Jonah: greater than prophet and king. He was greater than the Temple; He was superior to all the relationships of life: He rose above every earthly Matt. 12: 6, 50 place and state. And when He sets Himself above all else, we may well ask, as was asked of John the Baptist, "Whom makest thou thyself?" But we shall not get the humble answer that John gave, "I am but a voice!" No: this meek and lowly Nazarene will tell us from the very throne, "I am the first Rev. 1: 17, 18 and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead—I am alive for evermore: I have the keys of hell and death." It is God who thus speaks: let all the earth keep silence before Him.

If Jesus were but mortal like ourselves—and no more, what consummate self-assertion, on His part,

to make the least special demands upon our lives! He speaks to men with the same divine authority as He spake to the winds and waves. He says, "If
 Luke 9: 23, 24 any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me: for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." There is a similar tone when He sets Himself above every human tie, and then concludes,
 Luke 14: 33. "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." No mere man dare make such a claim upon your life and mine: that rests with God alone. If Christ were not God, His demands would be destitute of all loyalty and love: they would be destructive of social life. But as God, He simply declares that which God established amid the smoke of the Holy Mount, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

It was a noble confession that Simon Peter made, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And then followed that divine declaration which has been so sadly perverted and so falsely used to bind men's consciences: "I say unto thee, That thou
 Matt. 16: 18. art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Then comes the additional pledge, "I
 Matt. 16: 19. will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The keys of the kingdom of heaven belong to God. No man who distinguishes between divine and human rights

would exercise the authority to absolve and to excommunicate—that is God's office. But Jesus here assumes this divine right and commissions His disciples to exercise it. He commits it to His Church to be used in His name through all time. He takes to Himself God's authority to bind and loose, and establishes its service because of His divine right and title to it.

The manner in which He pronounced woes upon those who rejected Him, is suggestive of divine judgment. And when He taught His disciples to be humble, He set a little child in their midst. Then came the precious promise, "Whoso shall receive Matt. 18: 5, 6. one such little child in my name, receiveth me." And then, too, came that terrible antithesis, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." A declaration like that should start some serious thought in the mind of those who discredit the divinity of Christ: it should startle those who try to shake men's faith in Him as the Redeemer of our race. All who teach salvation by the evolution of life; all who teach that man without Christ is a saved creature; all who teach salvation by character and not by Christ: all such offend those who believe in Christ—they cause them to stumble. Thus, they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ.

Jesus everywhere makes Himself one with His disciples: it marks the perfection of His humanity. He everywhere attaches to Himself the honor and

power that belong to God: it marks the completeness of His divinity. He makes no mere human promise when He says, "Whosoever shall give you
 Mark 9: 41. a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." And when He counsels them, "Call no man your father upon the earth, for one
 Matt. 23: 9, 10. is your Father which is in heaven: neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, even Christ:" when He puts these names thus side by side, there is a reasonable inference that it was His purpose to treat each as divine. The more so when, in the same connection, He exalts Himself in God's place; as He does when He speaks as the ever-existent
 Matt. 23: 34. One: "Behold, I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes;" or when He assumes the tone of omnipotent love, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou
 Matt. 23: 37, 38. that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not: behold, your house is left unto you desolate." These claims are clouds without water; they are raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame, if He who speaks them is but mortal like ourselves.

Is it possible that Jesus was given to idle boast? Was His speech but loud and lofty bombast like that of Goliath of Gath? We smite our breasts at the thought! And yet, such must have been the case; unless He was more than man. God alone would dare to speak as He spake—if there was truth in the inward parts. Who can look within Gethsemane and doubt the sincerity of His heart?

who can hear Him as He agonized there, "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me;" and not be moved to his soul's depths and acknowledge the self-immolation of that precious life! The meek submission with which He bowed to His Father's will: the calm composure with which He faced the approaching foe! Yet mark the loftiness of soul with which He rebuked Peter as he drew that fragile blade, "Put up thy sword: Thinkest thou Matt. 26: 52-54 that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled that thus it must be?" What idle boast that would be, if Jesus were not God incarnate! But vest Him with His own omnipotence, and the glory of God turns the darkness of Gethsemane into the very brightness of Paradise.

In like strain are the words which He uttered at that last Paschal Feast. The moment of deepest intensity had come: Judas had gone out, and Jesus could now freely speak the thought of His heart. Mark what He says, "Now is the Son of Man John 13: 31, 32 glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." These words are easy of comprehension if we acknowledge that Jesus came forth from the Father and, having finished His work, was about to leave the world and go unto the Father: they are clear if His Godhead is admitted to be a Scriptural fact. If, however, He was but a man, born in time and died in time, with no pre-existence and no resurrection to crown His earthly life; then these words are incompre-

hensible: they are void of all significance: they are fleeting as the breath of their utterance. But that was not His spirit; and that was not the effect. It was the divine asserting its divine right and claiming the honor that is peculiarly divine. It was God anticipating in time the glory that was His from everlasting to everlasting.

These claims of Christ—these special acts—how shall we interpret them? How can we, aside from the divinity of His nature? They are marked by sincerity of heart: they are expressive of truth in the inward parts. They are substantiated by the proportionate balancing between the outward manifestation and the inward might. And shall all this go for nought? Shall philosophic religion undermine our faith in historic fact? The history that gives Christ His place as man—that very history gives Him His rank as God. The history that tells of the purity and truth of His words—that very history tells of the omnipotence of His works. And so, the argument that would set aside His divinity, would also set aside His humanity! The irony of logic: into what straits it drives men who trifle with truth! The enemies of the orthodox faith in Christ as God manifest in the flesh, prove too much: they therefore prove nothing—their argument falls to the ground. And so, Christ reigns supreme; and He will reign till He come to take His ransomed home. Christ reigns supreme; and He will reign for ever, and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

HOMAGE AND HONORS.

THE spirit of worship is a part of man's nature: it is inseparable from it. No other creature of earth possesses it: no other creature of earth is capable of it. It exhibits the unity of the race as well as its separateness from every other form of animal life. In the case of man in his state of nature, the object of worship varies according to the prevailing spirit—the civilizing influences, the degrading forces, the culture or lack of culture, each having its special effect. In all ages, the hosts of the skies have been objects of adoration, while the heroes of earth have been lifted up and made to sit in heavenly places.

The tendency, however, is always downward—a brutalizing of the noblest ideals of the world's sublimest thought. The charge that St. Paul makes is of universal application: Men become wise in their imaginations; their foolish heart is darkened; they change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. In short, they follow the desires of their own hearts. The natural man is given to worship; but he worships the creature in the fulfilment of its lusts. Rom. 1: 21-23

In early ages, there was one notable exception to the idolatries that abounded on all sides. It was that people to whom Jehovah said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." He had made choice

of a patriarchal line and had separated unto Himself a peculiar people. And His command was, "I am the Lord thy God: walk before me and be thou perfect." Down through the centuries, this people stands unique—with a history of mighty deliverances, and universal empire as a well founded hope. And in it all, Jehovah was supreme. While there were lapses into the idolatries of the surrounding nations and tribes; while they even turned the emblems of God's deliverance into objects of adoration; distressing captivities brought them to a sense of their disloyalty to God's name; they became penitently conscious of Jehovah's just judgments; their cry brought new evidence of God's saving might; and it was the sincere confession of their hearts, "Thou art God; and beside thee there is none else."

At last Christ came—came when the Temple worship was at its height; came when the honor of God's name was jealously guarded by priest and scribe. There was fanaticism; there were idolatries of a subtle sort—unconscious idolatries; there was hypocrisy: but the rulers were zealous for God's worship and God's name; and blasphemies were met with stones. "He made himself equal with God," was the charge that sent Jesus to the Cross.

It was under such influences and amid such surroundings that Jesus grew to man's estate. He honored His Father's House; He honored His Father's Name. It was His sad complaint, "I honor my Father and ye do dishonor me." He had a lofty conception of the religious life. When Satan tempted Him to do him homage, His pure

spirit revolted at the thought and He gave that sharp rebuke, "Get thee, hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve." He had a lofty view of the devotional life: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." He despised flatteries. When that man knelt to Him and asked, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus said unto him, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good, but one, that is, God." False honor could not pass without rebuke: He met it with sharp replies: He would not accept the homage of a false heart. He knew the truth expressed by the Psalmist, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." There could, therefore, be no idolatries, no hypocrisies, in the ministries of His life.

And yet, He who said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve"—He accepted divine honor and claimed it. No sooner did He go up from the Jordan to accomplish the work for which He was made manifest, than He began to accept the worship of men. He received, without protest on His part, divine honors, divine names, divine praise. When Nathanael had proof of Christ's omniscience, he confessed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God." Jesus not only accepted his tribute of praise; He even assured the man of greater evidence of His divine nature. That night out upon the deep, when the disciples were battling against the waves and Christ came to the rescue, the winds ceased and there was a great calm. And they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him,

Matt. 14: 33. saying, "Of a truth, thou art the Son of God." Again there was no evidence of displeasure, not a word of rebuke. They made Him equal with God: He accepted their praise.

We are not surprised, therefore, when He openly claims the same homage that is due to the Father—an homage that is based upon the oneness of the divine essence: "I and my Father are one." The Jews had sought to kill Him, because He usurped God's name. In reply, He co-ordinates His works with those of the Father, thus giving occasion for the charge that He made Himself equal with God. He did not deny the charge: He rather confirmed it by those words which plainly mark His divine office, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." **John 5:** 22, 23 Thus He no longer passively accepts men's praise: He is self-assertive—claims for Himself universal homage. In point of divine honor, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

There are other instances that display the same undoubted fact—the truth being the more strongly punctuated because of its historic guise. The Pharisees excommunicated the man to whom Jesus had given sight. Jesus met him, opening the eyes of his understanding: He gave him spiritual sight. In doing so, He revealed Himself by His divine name, as He asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" **John 9:** 35-38 And when the man, groping for the truth, inquired, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" the answer came, "Thou hast both

seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." And the man believed and worshipped Him. It was divine honor: and Jesus accepted it.

When Lazarus died, and Jesus spake those wonderful words which none but God may speak, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"—words which have ever been the comfort of God's trusting people:—when Jesus spake these words, Martha replied, "I believe that thou art John 11: 27. the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus had gently reproved her for being troubled over household cares; but there is no rebuke when she honors Him with a divine name. And He proves Himself worthy of it by performing a divine work.

The darkness of Golgotha was past: the brightness of Easter had come; the women had gone to the sepulchre with spices, but they found an empty Matt. 28: 6-9. grave. The angel was there with the message, "He is risen;" and they ran with the joyful news to the disciples. And as they made haste, they met Jesus; and casting themselves down, they held Him by the feet and worshipped Him. It was the deepest, purest adoration of the heart; and Jesus owned it.

And when the eventide had come, the disciples were gathered where the doors were shut—for they feared the Jewish rage: and Jesus stood in their midst. But Thomas was not there. And later, when they told him that they had seen the Lord, he would not believe it. The second Easter day came: the disciples were with one accord in one place: Jesus

stood in their midst: and Thomas was there. And with the clear evidence of Christ's personal presence—pierced hands and feet, pierced side—all doubt removed, and faith in place of doubt; Thomas made
 John 20: 28. confession of His name, "My Lord and my God." If Jesus were less than God and Lord, such idolatrous homage would not have passed without rebuke.

Again His disciples met Him in Galilee: they met Him there by His appointment. "And when
 Matt. 28: 17. they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted." There can be but one inference as to the nature of this worship: they worshipped Him as divine. The Apostolic life confirms its nature: the history of the Church substantiates it. They adored Him as God; and He accepted their homage.

The doctrine of St. Paul is so definite as to remove all doubt relative to the divine honors that should be paid to Christ: "God hath highly exalted
 Phil. 2: 9-11. him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." That surely should answer every doubt and shut off all debate. And it does—except in the case of men to whom it might be said as Jesus said to those who denied His Messianic claim, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Nothing but rank infidelity can resist this testimony of the Apostle.

The majesty of Christ is pictured by the Psalmist:

“Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Psalm 2: 7. thee.” And when He became the first-born among many brethren, the command was given, “Let all Heb. 1: 6. the angels of God worship him.” Can man withhold his praise while angels adore His name? He almighty to save, as He saved Peter from the waves—shall He not have the deepest devotion of our hearts!

At the last day, when the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, shall prevail, the hosts of heaven shall sing the new song, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, Rev. 5: 12, 14 and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing:” and the four and twenty elders shall fall down and worship Him. At His birth, kings came and laid their treasures at His infant feet. In His ministry of heavenly might, divine honors were shown Him by those who experienced the omnipotence of His love. As He sits on the throne of His glory, prayer goes up continually in His name for the benefits of His saving grace. And at last, the whole created host shall sound His praise, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Christ on the throne: the universe at His feet, filled with wonder, love, and praise.

And all this is the more significantly remarkable in view of the fact that, under the Mosaic code, idolatry was so abhorrent. The chosen people grew into so deep a consciousness of its guilt and were so sensitive to it, that the least tendency toward it, the least manifestation of it, was treated as the grossest

form of blasphemy. It was the one point where they shunned the very appearance of evil. We have abundant evidence of this in the Holy Scriptures.

There was the case of Cornelius—that devout man who feared God with all his house. He was instructed, through a vision, to send for Peter, who should tell him what he ought to do. And when Peter came, Cornelius fell down at his feet and worshipped him. But Peter bade him rise, saying, Acts 10: 26. “Stand up; I myself also am a man.” More than once, Peter had seen such honor bestowed upon his Master: and his Master accepted it. But Peter would not accept it. He knew he was human; he was certain that his Master was divine. As a man, he would not dare to receive divine honors; but he knew that divine honors belonged to Christ because His nature was divine. Peter knew his place: what was equally important, he knew Christ’s place and the honors that belonged to it.

A thrilling incident is furnished us in the case of Barnabas and Paul. It happened at Lystra. Paul had wrought a miracle. And when the people saw it, they lifted up their voice, saying, “The gods are Acts 14: 8-18. come down to us in the likeness of men.” Then the priest of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands to the city gates and was about to offer sacrifice. And when Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, “Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God.” This Paul who said that at the name

of Jesus every knee should bow, and who himself bowed the knee to Jesus, is shocked at the prospect of divine honors being accorded him, as though he were the Mercury of the Grecian myths. He was there to establish the worship of Christ and lead men to adore His name.

When John was in the spirit on the Lord's Day, he received those marvellous revelations of the last times. And he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which had shown him these things. And the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not; *Rev. 22: 8, 9.* for I am thy fellowservant, and of the brethren the prophets, and of them that keep the sayings of this book: worship God." Men refused divine honors; angels refused divine honors; Christ accepted divine honors. And why? Men and angels are servants of God: they dare not usurp their Master's place. Jesus Christ is God: He is entitled to the honors that belong to God. He claimed them: He received them. Every knee must bow to Him: every tongue must confess His name: all men must honor Him even as they honor the Father. The very fact that men and angels refused divine honors: the very fact that Christ accepted them, and men and angels accorded them, proves that in His mind, as well as theirs, He was divine.

"Worship God." We worship God when we worship Christ. We cannot worship God without Christ; for Christ's assurance is, "No man *John 14: 6.* cometh unto the Father but by me." We must pray to Him: we must pray through Him: we must ask the Father in His name.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FACT OF MIRACLE.

AT every point in the life of Christ, we touch the infinite; and we cannot get away from it.

There is no attempt, on His part, to produce such an effect: there is a perfect naturalness, a supreme simplicity, in word and act—a something that justifies the statement, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Sublimity is not an effort—it is an essence. And, throughout, the life of Christ was infinitely sublime.

When man performs a work, he has machinery proportioned to it. Not so with God. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth:” *Ps. 33: 6, 9.* “For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” And the divine is manifest in all the works of Christ. He commanded the winds and the sea: they stood still at His rebuke. He bade the devils depart: they obeyed His voice. At His word, sickness fled: at His call, life came back. Almighty virtue went forth in speech and look and touch, miraculous in effect. He claimed it; His disciples testified to it; His enemies acknowledged it.

The record is, “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” *Matt. 4: 23, 24*

And they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them." Is this record true—this record of miracle? Let us examine the evidence.

Jesus claimed it to be true—He who said, "I am the way, the Truth, and the Life." When John sent his disciples with the question, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Jesus answered, "Go your way, and tell John what Luke 7: 22. things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." When Jesus warned His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees, they said among themselves, "It is because we have taken no bread." Then came that gentle rebuke, "O ye of little faith: do ye not yet under- Matt. 16: 9, 10 stand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" He upbraided the cities, because they did not repent when they saw the mighty works He had done in their midst. Matt. 11: 20-24 He brought against His own people the weighty charge, "If I had not done among them the John 15: 24. works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." He sent the Pharisees to Herod with the message, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, Luke 13: 32. I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." And

He repeatedly referred to His miracles in general terms: as, for example, "Believe me that I am in
 John 14: 11. the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake." If Jesus' word is to be taken as evidence, we cannot get away from the conviction that He performed miracles and that these miracles, being performed in His own name, are proof of His almighty power. The stamp of God's method and God's might is upon them; and neither men nor devils can erase it.

It was Jesus Himself who said, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true." It was He, too, who quoted the Scripture, "The testimony of two men is true." In His case, we have the testimony of men whose knowledge of Him should be a guarantee of the truth of what they say: men who were not warped in their judgment by an over-enthusiastic acceptance of His utterances, or an undue measurement of His acts. It was a master in Israel—a man who was not carried away by the impulse of the moment: it was no less a man than Nicodemus—a cautious, calculating man—who came to Jesus by night and frankly confessed, "Rabbi,
 John 8: 2. we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." And when the multitude resorted to Him and saw His miracles, they said,
 John 10: 41. "John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of this man were true." It is these historical facts—and facts such as these—that gave Peter the basis of his argument on the day of Pentecost, "Ye
 Acts 2: 21-24. men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by

miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." If the testimony of history, substantiated by eyewitnesses, has any value, these words should carry weight.

Even those who were hostile to Christ, acknowledged His miraculous power and were dumbfounded before it. As they stood around the grave of Lazarus, where Jesus wept; some of them said with a tone of evident disparagement, "Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even John 11: 37. this man should not have died?" The raising of Lazarus, so near the Holy City, was Jesus' crowning offence. And so, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall John 11: 47, 48 come and take away both our place and nation." And when He hung upon the Cross, the rulers derided Him, and the people joined their voices, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, Luke 23: 35. the chosen of God." There surely is something confirmatory in acknowledgments such as these.

And yet, there are men who say, There is no such thing as a miracle. Atheism, as a matter of course, teaches that there are no miracles; because, if there is no God, there is no infinite Person with a motive

to work by exceptional modes. In this way, God is ruled out of the universe; the almightiness and unchangeableness of natural law takes His place; and men are driven to the deification of dust. There are those, again, whose philosophy owns an infinite, eternal Agent; but they claim that His very infinity excludes all finite acts, and that His very eternity excludes all temporal acts. And so, if we were to admit their premises, we would be driven to conclude that the conception of Revelation, as well as miracle, is an impossible one. All this, however, is purely speculative: it is philosophic inference—"a juggle born of the brain:" moreover, it has no basis in human consciousness or in fact: it certainly has no foundation in Scripture.

It is only the fool that saith in his heart, "There is no God;" while he who shuts God up to infinities, shuts Him out of this earth and away from every creature that moves upon it. With all such speculation, the true follower of Christ has neither part nor lot: those who advocate such things have a different spirit from that of Christ. If God moves within the limit of natural law, He is a finite creature: He is not a free agent. If God is simply a supreme originating cause, then an unchanging and unchangeable fate awaits every creature He has made. The former degrades God: the latter degrades man, whom God has made in His own image.

There are great laws working with perfect uniformity throughout the universe. The stars keep their place; the earth revolves in regular metre; sun and sphere move with mathematical exactness; the measurements of time and space are absolutely met:

it is the miracle of nature with the Almightyness of God to work it. In a certain broad sense, where there is life, there is miraculous might—a might which overcomes and contravenes nature. Life is everywhere superior to Law. According to the law of gravitation, everything should lie prone upon the earth: if fluid, it seeks the lowest possible level. The spar floats with the current: the straw is carried before the breeze. So much for dead substance. Not so in the case of the living creature. The man stands erect upon this globe: the fowl soars above it. The fish swims against the stream: the bee flies in the face of the wind. In these and countless other cases, the law of nature is not set aside; it is not held in abeyance: it is still operative, still active. But a new power has come in—a new cause has intervened and given new results. It is the miracle of living might.

These are finite things: they occur in a finite way: they are going on all the time. And so, while the miracle-act is there, the wonder-part of it is gone. Let us turn to infinities. Is God's almighty-ness evident only in the creation and control of the universe? And shall He not be able, in all the cycles of time, to stretch forth His invisible hand and give special motion to individual things, with special visible effects? Must He who moves in the infinitude of His almighty-ness: must He bind Himself down to the limits of an unchanging Law; while every motion of man and beast, of fowl and creeping thing, is a miracle of finite might, in open defiance of natural law and superior to it? Surely, God is not thus the slave of His own creation: God is not thus inferior to His own creatures!

The age of miracle is not past: we are living in the midst of it. Every prayer a man breathes, is a confession of faith as to the possibility of divine interference with the natural course of events: it expresses an implied conviction that God will interpose some blessed providence that man craves, and change the trend of life to satisfy the longing of the heart. Moses prayed; and the hand that was lifted
Ex. 32: 11-14. to blot out his people, came down with a benediction upon the sinning host. Hannah prayed and
I Sam. 1: 10. wept sore: and she inherited a promise. Heze-
II Kings 20:3 kiah prayed; and fifteen years were added to his life. The prophet prayed; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months:
Jas. 5: 17, 18. again he prayed; and the heavens gave rain and the earth brought forth her fruit. The Church
Acts 12: 5. prayed; and an angel came down and smote off Peter's chains, and the man went forth free. These are the prayer miracles of Bible times.

Man, by nature, is a praying creature. Deep in his soul is settled the unwavering conviction, There is a God who hears and answers prayer: and the combined philosophies of all ages have not been able to smother it or to train him out of it. When we go to God in prayer, what do we do, in point of fact, but ask Him to perform a miracle? And if everything comes in the course of nature, according to the fixed laws that control it: if nothing occurs outside of pure natural courses, which an eternal law has predetermined for all time; then man's native conviction is a cheat and a snare, and prayer is the supreme folly of human life. No providence, no prayer, is the inevitable. Shall we suffer our-

selves to be driven to this blank alternative—this God-emptied blackness of ashes? That is where the denial of miracles drives us: that is where it would make shipwreck of our lives.

The miracles of Christ were performed that men might believe that He is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they might have life through His name. That is the primary purpose; and we must not lose sight of it. But there is a secondary purpose of scarcely less importance. The miracles of Christ were special providential acts, rising above the natural course of events. They were performed in answer to prayer, whether of the lips or of the heart. They were direct, visible, outward acts—the incarnated answer of the incarnate Christ, the pledge of the fulfilment of the promise, “If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” If no miracle had ever been performed, or there were no possibility of its performance, then no prayer would ever well up from the human heart. But the universal consciousness that there is a special providence in life above the control of the ordinary course of nature; the conviction that God “doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth,” and that the miracles of Christ are proof of it: it is this that enables us to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.”

And then, as to that primary purpose of the miracles of Christ: That we might believe that He is the

Son of God, and that believing, we might have life through His name. The Son of God! And who is the Son of God, according to Scripture, but God the Son! The acts of finite creatures are finite: the acts of Christ were infinite. Performed in His own name, by His inherent might, they prove Him to be the Infinite One. To deny His miracles is to deny His omnipotence: nay more, to deny His miracles is to deny His common honesty of life: it is to brand Him as a false prophet and His disciples as men full of hypocrisies and lies. To own His miracles, is to own His almighty power: it is to acknowledge Him as the Almighty One.

And there our faith rests: there our comfort lies. Christ the omnipotent One, stooping to our estate to lift us up to heavenly seats: His almightiness manifest in miracles of nature; His almightiness assured in miracles of grace. It is this that fortifies our hearts: it is this that enables us to comprehend His miracle of saving might, and to confess, "I know that my Redeemer lives."

CHAPTER IX.

THE SAVING MIGHT.

THE acts of God are an expression of His attributes. Wisdom, love, might, are everywhere exhibited in boundless measure: they everywhere co-operate to beneficent ends. Creation, Redemption, Sanctification: these are rooted and grounded there. And in their outaction, Jesus Christ holds central place. His earth-existence, therefore, had a definite purpose: it linked the two eternities. A special era marked His advent: it became the center-point of the ages; while all the universe circles about it.

The fact of Christ is a certified fact. His birth and death, His resurrection and ascension—these cannot be pushed aside. They have their historic place: they have their separate office and effect. And that office and effect are not along natural lines; they are not of the ordinary sort: they are separate from all else. Jesus Christ was not simply a great teacher and a great example of moral life—a mere model of moral excellence. He was, indeed, all that; but He was infinitely more. It is a significant fact that He treated the moral aspect of His own life as a passing part of His earthly existence: it was not the essential purpose for which He came. The Son of God was not manifest that we might merely have a perfect example of moral

excellence. He gives as the sum and substance of His incarnate state, "I am come that they might
John 10: 10. have life." And the disciples in all their teaching and writing and preaching put the Cross first—His reconciling work there. The blood of atonement holds first place.

It has become the habit of our times, even among those who acknowledge the redeeming work of Christ and base all upon it, to overshadow it by His works of mercy and love. In preaching the brotherhood of man through the loving life of Christ, they lose sight of the brotherhood of man through the sacrificial death of Christ. Thus the great redemptive act is obscured by the over-emphasis, in a fundamental sense, of mere moral qualities. This is the first step toward the dethronement of Christ. It degrades the Church to a cult with Christ as the incarnation of moral principles. Thus the code of Christ, and not the blood of Christ, becomes the source of saving grace. One more shift of the scenes, and men will have the cult without Christ. The movement is on foot: and should it be realized, as some fondly hope, then Christ will be eliminated even from moral life.

It is high time, therefore, that the place which Jesus occupies in the Christian system should be pointed out and emphasized and urged anew: we dare not lose sight of it. The blood of the atonement, the sacrifice for sin, the Cross with its glory and shame: these are foundation stones. It is a sad outcome when men build thereon wood, hay and stubble. But what of those who tear up the very foundation, cast it aside, and make wood, hay and

stubble the basic part? What universal ruin when the besom of destruction sweeps over it!

The saving merit of Christ lies at the foundation of the Christian system. Whoever denies it, denies the evident teaching of Christ and His Apostles: whoever rejects it, has no right to usurp the Christian name. Like a pirate-ship, he floats a friendly flag that makes the innocent an easy prey. The saving office of Christ was proclaimed by the prophets: it was preached by the Apostles. It answers to man's need: it accords with God's love. It is the only thing that gives consistency and sense to the marvellous setting of Christ's life.

The prophetic word was uttered long before the Advent: "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our Isa. 53, 4-6. transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed: the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." These words sound as if they had been written by a humble penitent at the foot of the cross—one who came and laid his soul-burden there. And throughout, it is the evident teaching of the Old Testament, "Thou Isa. 53: 10. shalt make his soul an offering for sin." The propitiation of Christ is there promised in exact terms; while the whole round of sacrifice under the Mosaic code has no significance without it. It was but the shadow of good things to come; and its culmination is declared in that sublime sentence, "Christ our I Cor. 5: 7, 8. Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast."

As we open the New Testament, the first fact that faces us is the fact of Christ's saving might. It is an angel that speaks: he brings a message to Joseph relative to his espoused wife: "She shall
 Matt. 1: 21. bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." It had been revealed to Simeon that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And on the day of the Presentation, when he came by the Spirit into the Temple, and took the child Jesus in his arms, his prayer implies the truth that the angel spoke, "Mine eyes have seen thy salva-
 Luke 2: 30, 31 tion which thou hast prepared before the face of all people." A like revelation came to John the Baptist—he who cried, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Pointing to Jesus, he fixed on him all human hope: "Behold, the
 John 1: 29. Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." These all clearly declare the propitiatory work of Christ—salvation through His atoning sacrifice.

In that notable interview with Nicodemus, Jesus declares the real office of His advent: "God so
 John 3: 16, 17 loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." And in that beautiful chapter which tells us of His shepherd-love, His saving office as well as His shepherd care finds a place, "I am the good shep-
 John 10: 14, 15, 28. herd:" "I lay down my life for the sheep:" "I give unto them eternal life." And elsewhere He

makes the specific statement, "The Son of Man Matt. 18: 11 is come to save that which was lost." And still more specific are His words, "The Son of Man came Matt. 20: 28. not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." These are broad hints of the redemptive act. Viewed from the Cross, they are unmistakable. And they confirm the faith of the patriarchal age, "I have found Job 33: 24. an atonement." Jesus, therefore, had a clear view of the crowning purpose of His life; and so He moved steadfastly toward Calvary's Height, where He would accomplish it. And in anticipation of it, with all its saving significance, He instituted the Holy Supper, the Passover of the New Covenant: and His solemn words were these, "This is my Matt. 26: 28. blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

"My blood: shed for the remission of sins!" So Jesus said: and it was so shortly before they nailed Him to the accursed tree! But men of the new cult deny it. They will tell you that you are not saved by the blood of Jesus: they assure you that you are saved by your own character. Here, then, is conflict. And whom shall we believe? Whom shall we trust? Shall Jesus' truth and promise go for nought? Shall we not rather adapt the words of St. Paul and say, Let Christ be true, but every man a liar! Christ against the world, if need be! But Christ does not stand alone. The prophets were with Him: the Apostles were with Him: the Holy Church throughout all the world is with Him. And who is against Him? The infidel, the agnostic, the whole crowd of little cults that overflow with

Pharisaic conceits: these are against Him; these deny what He so manifestly declares. And against these we must be on our guard; for they come as angels of light, and they would deceive, if possible, the very elect.

The blood of the covenant was the theme of the Old Testament: the blood of the covenant is the theme of the New. The former was the shadow; the latter is the substance. The remission of sins through the Crucified One was the climax of Pentecost. And from that day, the Cross became the gateway into the kingdom of Christ. It was the conviction of the Apostles that "There is none
 Acts 4: 12. other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," except the name of the crucified One. At the house of Cornelius, Peter closed his sermon with these words, "To him give
 Acts 10: 43. all the prophets witness that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." The same Apostle, in his defence of the Gentile converts, declared the perfect equality of all men under the Gospel of Christ: "We believe that
 Acts 15: 11. through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they." And later, when the keeper of the prison cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" the united answer of the Apostles was,
 Acts 16: 31. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." So Christ taught; so the Holy Ghost inspired the Apostles to teach; so the Christian Church believes and teaches: she is built

upon the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone.

If we turn to the Epistles, the evidence is overwhelming. Salvation by faith in the crucified One, is the truth that underlies the entire system of Apostolic doctrine. St. Paul is very definite on this point—he who determined not to know anything among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He says that we are “justified freely by his grace through Rom. 3: 24, the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” And in the same letter, he covers the whole round of redeeming love in words as comforting as they are faithful and true, “God commendeth his love Rom. 5: 8, 9, toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” And once again, he lays down the definite rule, “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Rom. 10: 9. Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” And so, not by works of righteousness which we have done; but according to His mercy God saves us. And the mercy of God finds the way of its exercise through the merit of Christ.

This is the uniform teaching of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. At one time he says, “God was II Cor. 5: 19. in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.” At another time, he says that our Lord Jesus Christ “gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver Gal. 1: 4. us from this present evil world.” He goes back to the redeeming source when he writes, “Christ Gal. 3: 15. hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being

made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." And he but rounds out the thought when he declares that in Him "we have redemption through his blood, Eph. 1: 7. the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The same eternal truth is everywhere in evidence: "God hath not appointed us to I Thess. 5: 9. wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ;" "This is a faithful saying that Christ Jesus I Tim. 1: 15. came into the world to save sinners:" "There is one God and one mediator between God and I Tim. 2: 5, 6. men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." In short, in order to rule out the doctrine of salvation by blood, we must rule Jesus Christ out of the Scriptures. And then salvation by character will take the place of salvation by Christ! What a wretched substitute!

"The blood of Christ;" "the blood of the everlasting covenant:" these are not empty forms of speech; they deal with a great eternal fact. They are the basis of the blessed assurance that Christ Titus 2: 14. "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." And under all conditions of life, we can comfort ourselves with the universal scope of the redemptive act; for the record is that Heb. 2: 9. Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; and it is individualized by the same Apostle when he speaks of the unchangeable priesthood of Christ, "Wherefore he is able also to save Heb. 7: 25. them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for

them." And so all our hope lies in what St. Peter writes to the Churches, "Ye know that ye were I Pet. 1: 18, 19 not redeemed with corruptible things; but with the precious blood of Christ." Therefore we confidently conclude with the beloved disciple, "The I John 1: 7. blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

It seems strange that men should doubt or deny this foundation doctrine. It is plainly stated in Scripture: it plainly meets the deepest need of the soul. But these are the very points at which men stumble. They do not believe the Scriptures: they think they are able to save themselves. They praise the ethics of Christ: they cull from the Bible its beautiful moral precepts; and out of these they would build up the fabric of their lives. They teach the evolution of the religious instinct—its incarnation in word and act. The doctrine of self-sufficiency once in the heart, there is no place for Christ there. Every man thus becomes his own Christ.

And men point to character without Christ and ask, Can character in Christ show better results? What shall we answer? How make plain the difference? There is a natural life and a spiritual life. And there are natural morals and spiritual morals. In outward form, it may be difficult to distinguish them: in essence, however, they are distinct. We have a physical life that is common to all earth creatures; but we are more than beasts. We have a natural moral life that is common to all men; but that does not limit the Christian life to nature. The goodness of the Christian life is different from the goodness of the natural life: they spring from a

different source; they have a different quality, a different motive; they are different everywhere except in outward appearance. Every animal loves its offspring; but animal love is not the same as human love. A mother's love is not a creature-love. We unphilosophic souls may not be able to define the difference; but we know it exists.

And there is just as great a difference between Christian love and natural human love; between Christian morals and natural human morals. Christian love, which is the basis of the Christian moral life, is the fruit of the Holy Ghost in the heart: natural love, and the natural morals that spring from it, is the outgrowth of the natural heart. They are as distinct from each other as animal love is distinct from human love. The love and the moral life that does not spring from the Holy Ghost in the heart, is natural love: the love of God in the heart is by the Holy Ghost—it is there by the meditation of Christ.

Let us, then, not confound natural morals with Christian morals—in particular, where natural morals have the influence of the Church of Christ to mould them. Above all, let us remember that neither of them saves. Let us cling to the uniform testimony of the Apostles, “God hath appointed us to obtain sal-

I Thess. 5: 9. vation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.”

Let us cling to what the universal Church confesses,

The Nicene Creed. “I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ: who for us

men and for our salvation came down from heaven: and was made man: and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.”

CHAPTER X.

THE CENTRAL LIFE.

THERE have been great teachers in the past: men whose glory streamed with a glowing light; men who have been the wonder of each succeeding age. These men have had a message for mankind—philosophic, religious, scientific: and while temples have mingled with the dust and empires have passed away; their teachings have survived the ravages of time; they have been studied and admired from age to age; and whatever of truth they contain still holds a place in mind and heart. The imperishableness of truth: how it lives in spite of rack and stake, of jeer and gibe. "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again"—for truth is of God: and so, "The eternal years of God are her's." And that is why some very poor systems of religion and philosophy survive: there is just enough truth in them to keep them alive. The truth within them is the salt that saves. If that should lose its savor, then all would be lost.

It has become the habit of our time to class Christ among the great teachers of the past—the greatest of all the great, the most perfect possible. They tell us of Buddha in India, of Confucius in China, of Plato and Aristotle in Greece, of Mohammed in Arabia: wonderful men of wonderful knowledge, who established religions and proclaimed philosophies that have swayed the universe of thought,

and whose powers are still the magnet of untold multitudes. These men—and men like these—were great: they did great things for their times and for all succeeding time: giants were they in intellect, and, in some instances, in moral precept and culture. They sit throned and crowned while this world lasts: nothing can dim the glory of their lives along the line of manly excellence, mental equipment, or noble achievement.

And yet, Jesus is as distinct from them as day is from night. He is the sun, the source of light: they are but stars—stars of the first magnitude, let us grant, beautiful, glorious, bright; but their light is a borrowed one. And they knew it: and they taught in view of it. And that is where the difference lies: that is what sets Christ in a class alone. Sages, philosophers, founders of religions, always pointed to objective truth, objective fact. The center of their religion and philosophy was outside of themselves: it never centered in their life—not in a single case. But Jesus made Himself the center of His teaching: He stood forth as the great eternal, original source from whom all things come and in whom all things combine. That is the marvel of it. And that is what separates Him from the good and great of all time. A running review of the central place He holds in His teachings will convince anyone of this broad difference. The instances, with briefest comment, would fill a volume: let us be content with a few of the most striking cases.

In that remarkable chapter where Jesus gives

testimony concerning John, and then upbraids the cities for their impenitence, He gives thanks to the Father that the revelation of grace, despised by the wise and the prudent, is made manifest unto babes. And then He seems to get a vision of the great struggling, sorrowing mass of humanity; and stretching out His hands, as if the whole suffering world stood within the sound of His voice, He appeals in tenderest tone, "Come unto me all ye Matt. 11:28-30 that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." This is no human call: this is no human promise. The disciples of Christ, since the day He uttered this sublime sentiment, have found in it comfort and peace; not merely because it is a sentiment that suits their souls' estate, but because it is God's promise and they were convinced that Christ, as a faithful God, would fulfil it. If Christ is not divine, these words are hollow mockery: they trifle with the weary weight of woe: they mock at our burdens and our cares.

The people sought Jesus because they saw the miracles and ate of the loaves. Hence the appeal, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for John 6:26-60 that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." Then came the demand for a sign and reference to the manna in the wilderness, the murmuring and the rebuke. And then came these words, "I am the bread of life: He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never

thirst: I am that bread of life: I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." It is written that from that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. It is a sad record: yet their conduct, in a measure, commands our respect. Jesus had made Himself the source and center of faith and life—the life of their life: He claimed God's place! And these men, denying His Godhead, turned from Him as one who blasphemed God's name and usurped God's office. If Jesus was but a man, their conduct was consistent. They were nobler than Judas who kissed his Master with treacherous intent: nobler than men who claim to admire Christ but turn His truth into a lie. We must do one of two things: we must either accept Christ as God manifest in the flesh, or else go back to the beggarly elements of the world and walk with Him no more.

In the midst of His ministry, Jesus lifted up His voice in the Temple and said, "I am the light of
John 8: 12. the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The light of life—this natural light of this natural life—comes from the sun, the center of our universe; it is the great generating source of light and life. And now, when Jesus claims that He is the source of life, He makes Himself the eternal center of spiritual light and life. That were a monstrous claim for any man to make: man whose breath is in his nostrils, whose days are as grass! Could

rational man say, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life!" And yet, the man Jesus said it. No wonder the Jews stoned Him from their presence: He had made Himself God; and such a pretence could not pass without rebuke. The old alternative, therefore, is before us: Is He God? Then let us worship Him. Is He but a man? Then He hath spoken blasphemies: let Him be crucified! There is no escape: the one or the other must end the case.

The same thought underlies His declaration of shepherd care: "I am the good shepherd, and John 10: 14. know my sheep and am known of mine." Himself the center, and none else! There can not be two centers to the same sphere. And nowhere is this truth more manifest than when He wept at Lazarus' grave and called him back to life: the human and the divine meeting in the tenderness and the almightiness of love. He had said, "I am the resurrec- John 11: 25, 26 tion and the life; he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The resurrection and the life—the power over the grave and the power of eternal existence: that power, said Jesus, is Mine: it is inherent in Me: I am the Resurrection and the Life. He proves that He is the resurrection by calling Lazarus from the grave: and we believe that He is the life; because He who is almighty in deed is almighty in truth and love: His words are truth as well as spirit and life.

The last days were drawing nigh: the Cross was in sight: it now became the central theme. It was on one of those days that Christ uttered the remarkable words which signified what death He should die:

John 12: 32. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Is this an expression of self-centered human pride? Does an overwrought imagination make Him fancy that He is the Supreme One? It must be, if modern thought is true. But modern thought is human thought: and human thought that soars on human wings, at last plunges from the unnatural height and perishes. It is the story of Lucifer—him who fell like lightning from above! Poor modern thought: what a very husk it is without Christ in it!

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." These are not mortal words: they fit not mortal lips. We bow in wonder and amaze before their utterance; for it is God's message, and it declares the wonders of His grace. It reminds us of what the Apostle says, when he tells us that Jesus was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: "Wherefore, God also hath highly
Phil. 2: 9-11. exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Here, as everywhere else, the teaching of the Apostle harmonizes exactly with that of Christ.

It may safely be assumed that there is nothing in all the declarations of Christ that has brought greater comfort to sorrowing hearts, than the tender words with which He tried to cheer His disciples. They were cast down at the thought of His departure. He saw their inner depths, and the conflict there: the fainting spirit, the wavering spirit—they could not hide it from His all-searching eye. And the spirit of heaviness melts as He gives them a vision of heavenly certitudes, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. John 14: 1-3. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." The vision was too boundless for their poor eyes: but what comfort, what hopes, what cheer, it would inspire!

And who would dare to put into our hearts a doubt as to the truth of these words and the assurance they give? Jesus stands, the very Cross in sight; and He makes Himself—Faith in Him, Faith in what He does, Faith in what He pledges to do: He makes Himself the center of their comfort and of their hope—aye, the center of our comfort and hope. He does not say, "Hope thou in God:" He says, Hope in Me! He does not say, "God is your refuge and strength:" He says, Trust Me; I go to prepare a place for you; I will come again and take you home! What very Apples of Sodom He holds up before our eyes, unless He is almighty to do what

He promises. And mark you, He promises this just before He goes forth to die.

And when some of His disciples did not quite comprehend the full scope of what He had taught, He put His divine office beyond all doubt in those words so simple in form but so comprehensive in sense, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." This is no human office: the place which Jesus here assumes, belongs to God and none else. This humble Nazarene, this meek and lowly one, makes Himself the Supreme One, the All in All; the Way, the Truth, the Life. And this agrees with the Apostolic doctrine, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:"

John 14: 6. man cometh unto the Father but by me." This is no human office: the place which Jesus here assumes, belongs to God and none else. This humble Nazarene, this meek and lowly one, makes Himself the Supreme One, the All in All; the Way, the Truth, the Life. And this agrees with the Apostolic doctrine, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:"

1 Tim. 2: 5. between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:"

Acts 4: 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And the justification of this doctrine lies in the declarations of Christ who, in His teaching, lays claim to the divine attributes and proves each claim by a miracle proportioned to it.

It is evident, therefore, that Jesus stands distinct from all teachers of all time. Not one of them, from the least unto the greatest, made himself the center of his science: every one pointed to what he regarded as the supreme objective principle. But Jesus made Himself that principle; and He declared it whenever He taught. He made Himself the infinite center: "Come unto Me;" "I am the bread of life;" "Believe in Me." He thus set Himself

up as the central life—the source, the avenue, the support, of all spiritual life. And here is where He stands separate from teachers of every age. And He stands thus, because He was what the Evangelist pictured Him to be: “In him was life; and the John 1: 4. life was the light of men.”

It is sometimes put forth as an argument, that Jesus nowhere states specifically that He is God: that the Church's doctrine as to His divine nature in the unity of the Father and the Holy Ghost, is but an inference. This is no argument: it is subterfuge: it is too shallow for serious thought. Does any teacher, moral or otherwise, go up and down the land proclaiming himself to be a man? The human element of his nature is manifest. He is a man of some sort, and everyone knows it: the attributes of a man are evident at every point. It was not necessary for Jesus to go about and proclaim, “I am God.” In word and work, He gave evidence that the divine attributes were centered in Him—not inspired from without; but personal, inherent, an integral part of His nature.

Take out of the New Testament every sentence that proclaims Christ to be God, and there is practically nothing left: a few scattered moral precepts, a few scraps of disconnected history; and but little more. The Annunciation, the miraculous Conception, the wonderful Birth; every miracle, every prophecy, every promise; the most of the parables, the most of the Passion scenes; the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Pentecost: all torn out! What infidel hand would dare do it! And how utterly

desolate we would be! Like Mary at the tomb, we would mourn out our heart's deep grief, "They
John 20: 13. have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." And over the portals of our churches we would write: Crucified, Dead, Buried: Earth to earth, Ashes to ashes, Dust to dust—eternal dust!

Shall we thus be robbed of our hope? Jesus preached Himself: in this He stands alone. The disciples preached Jesus: not a system of philosophy, not mere moral culture, not an objective principle outside of Christ: but Jesus the source of every moral principle, the center of life and light. And when He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"—it is God who speaks; let men lay their hand upon their mouth and hold their peace!

CHAPTER XI.

THE RISEN CHRIST.

THE resurrection of Christ is an assured fact. To deny it is to sweep aside every historic statement with respect to it. It is to brand the Apostles as the worst hypocrites that ever breathed out blasphemies, the most wretched dupes upon whom the world of artifice has ever imposed its trickeries, or the blindest fanatics that ever sacrificed themselves for an imaginary cause. These Apostles, supported by many infallible proofs, went forth everywhere with the Resurrection as their central theme. They staked their lives: aye, they suffered and died for it. Such fidelity to historic fact the world has witnessed nowhere else. It must have basis to it: it must have more than some sweet sentiment to inspire it.

The enemies of the Cross of Christ are, to-day, massing their strength upon this point. As a rule, they are out-and-out evolutionists—the advocates of an hypothesis which has not a single settled fact of earth's earliest ages to warrant it and for which history does not furnish a scrap of evidence. And yet, they speak with authority: their word alone is infallible: their fiat makes the earth and peoples it. Away back in the infinitude of time—so they confidently assert—there was an unaccountable accumulation of star-dust: within it, the potentiality of life. By countless makings and remakings, crossings and

recrossings, from the primeval spore which grew and multiplied and differentiated into varieties, there came at last the period of ape-life, from which, by a process of natural selection, was evolved the pre-historic man. Instead of man being made a little lower than the angels, he was made a thousand and one degrees below the ape: instead of being a fallen creature, he is the survival of the fittest. If that be true, there is no need of an atonement: the death and resurrection of Christ would have no place in the development of the human race. That is what makes this theory so dangerous. There is not a settled fact of science to substantiate it; all history blankly contradicts it; but it has the glamour of learnedness, of profound research, of modernism: therein the infatuation lies. Let us hold fast to this principle: Whatever undermines a fundamental doctrine of Scripture, is false.

The Resurrection is such a fundamental part of the divine plan that it was kept continually before the disciples. The shock of crucifixion would be so great, that it was absolutely necessary to give special emphasis to it. For the darkness of the grave would blot out all hope, and nothing but infallible proofs, backed by the remembrance of Christ's promise that He would rise and go before them into Galilee, could quicken and confirm confidence as to its reality. They were soberminded men: no mere rumor could sway them. They must see His hands and His feet, and touch Him, and know of a surety that it was He and not a spirit.

And so, early in His ministry Jesus spoke of His resurrection as an assured fact. When Peter expressed the conviction of his heart, planted there by the Holy Ghost: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:" that was the point at which the disciples were prepared to have, in outline, the purpose of His advent and the chief events connected with it. And charging them that they should tell no man that He was the Christ, He began to show them "How Matt. 16: 21. that he must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." The scene on the Mount of Transfiguration was one of transcendent glory. Peter, James and John were witnesses to it. And as they came down, Jesus charged them, saying, "Tell the vision to no man, Matt. 17: 9. until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." And the further record is, "They kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean."

As Jesus passed with His disciples through Galilee, He again foretold His death and resurrection: "The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, Mark 9: 31. and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day." But they did not understand His saying and were afraid to ask Him. And finally, at the close of His ministry, He took His disciples apart, and He said unto them, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall Mark 10: 33, 34 be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and

shall deliver him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day, he shall rise again." And on that last solemn night, so shortly before the betrayal, He applied to Himself the word of prophecy, "I will smite the Shepherd, Matt. 26: 31, 32 and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." And then He gave the promise, "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

These prophecies of Christ had their terrible fulfilment: was that of the resurrection false? Was it fashioned by the disciples to deceive the people? Was the hallucination so great that they would die for it? Was not the Resurrection, as Jesus prophesied, the closing of a series of events—real happenings in His life? What else could they be? unless the testimony of history, in all ages, is absolutely false. Surely the madness of opposition to Christ has not reached such a limit.

Jesus suffered upon the Cross: history, sacred and profane, testifies to it: no one in right mind has ever denied it. We have so much solid fact. That He foretold His resurrection is admitted by His enemies. For the chief priests came to Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, Matt. 27: 63. while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." These words are significant. They are the certificate of Christ's death: they acknowledge the claim of Christ that He would rise from the dead. If that were all, that were enough to establish it.

But that is not all. We have the testimony of the angel, "He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Luke 24: 6-8. saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words." We have the testimony of the risen Christ, as He stood in the midst of His disciples and said unto them, "Peace be unto you: Behold my hands and my feet, then it is I myself: handle me and see: for Luke 24: 36, 39, 40, 46. a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet." Then He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scripture; and He said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."

This is history: it is not philosophy; it is not fancy; it is not fable. The sure word of prophecy precedes it; the fact of Christianity follows it: the two stand in perfect accord and witness to it. If all this is false; then all history is false: to-day is all we have.

As soon as Jesus passed from the visible presence of His disciples and they were blessed with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, they went everywhere preaching the Gospel; and the Resurrection was the inspiration as well as the subject of every argument. On that very day of Pentecost, Peter arose to sublime heights as he made the charge, "Ye men of Acts 2: 22-24. Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man

approved of God among you: Him ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." And then He took up the words of David, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither

Psalm 16: 10. wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption;" and he applied them to Christ: "Therefore,

Acts 2: 30-31. being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ."

When Peter and John were called to account for the miracle wrought upon the lame man, Peter spake without reserve, "Be it known unto you all, and to

Acts 4: 10. all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." And when they returned to the company of the disciples, the voice of thanksgiving went up to God, and a prayer for strength to speak His word with all boldness filled their lips. And upon this devout prayer followed the significant statement, "With great power gave

Acts 4: 33. the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."

The Apostles were again put into prison; again were they brought before the Jewish council; and once again the chief point of defence rested with the Resurrection: "The God of our fathers raised

Acts 5: 30, 32. up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree:

and we are his witnesses of these things." And all this testimony was given in the face of stripes and imprisonment: yet they ceased not to teach and to preach it.

A like testimony is furnished by St. Paul—him who once had breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the followers of Christ. He stood up in the synagogue at Antioch, and beckoning with his hand, said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience." And then he traced in rapid outline the history of the chosen race, the climax of which came with these words, "And when they had Acts 13: 16-31. fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead: and he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people." He gave the same testimony in the synagogue at Thessalonica. Three Sabbath days, he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, "Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suf- Acts 17: 3. fered and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus is Christ."

If we turn to his letters, we find the same unequivocal testimony. In his Epistle to the Romans, where he argues the efficacy of divine grace, he says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from Rom. 8: 11. the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, he declares the Resurrection in most emphatic terms, and establishes

it by an array of competent witnesses: "I delivered
 I Cor. 15: 3-8. unto you, first of all, that which I also received,
 how that Christ died for our sins, according to the
 Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose
 again the third day, according to the Scriptures:
 and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve;
 after that he was seen of above five hundred
 brethren at once: after that he was seen of James;
 then of all the Apostles: and last of all he was seen
 of me." Then follows that argument which has
 proved the Church's great defence and the lasting
 comfort of God's people: "Now if Christ be
 preached that he rose from the dead, how say some
 I Cor. 15:12-18 among you that there is no resurrection of the
 dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead,
 then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen,
 then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also
 vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of
 God; because we have testified of God that he raised
 up Christ, whom he raised not up if so be that the
 dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not
 Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith
 is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also
 which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." And
 then, seeing the awful alternative, he realizes the
 utter despair of the Christian life, should the Resur-
 rection be robbed of its reality: "If in this life only
 I Cor. 15: 19. we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most
 miserable."

But the Resurrection is not an Apostolic fable: it
 is a great authenticated fact. And St. Paul, under
 the spell of it, breaks forth in tone most confident,

“But now is Christ risen from the dead and be- 1 Cor. 15: 20.
 come the firstfruits of them that slept.” Then, after
 discussing the subject in sublimest measure, he raises
 the exultant shout, “O death, where is thy sting: 1 Cor. 15: 55.
 O grave, where is thy victory.” Once again he takes
 up his pen in defence of this great central principle
 of the Christian’s hope; and he exhorts the beloved
 Timothy, “Remember that Jesus Christ of the 11 Tim. 2: 8.
 seed of David was raised from the dead, according
 to my Gospel.” This was his constant theme: it was
 the constant theme of all the Apostles.

Is such an array of testimony to be swept aside by
 the dogmatic utterances of philosophy and science?
 Shall we suffer the theories and hypotheses and
 assumptions of atheists and materialists and agnos-
 tics—assumptions and hypotheses and theories which
 have no basis except in their own conceits: shall these
 things unsettle our faith, and strip us of all comfort,
 and drive us for ever to the gloom of the grave?
 Shall we not rather speak in triumphant tone,
 “Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no Rom. 6: 9.
 more; death hath no more dominion over him.”
 That is what Christ claimed: that is what the Apos-
 tles taught: that is what the Church confesses. And
 if we believe as St. Paul preached, we shall have St.
 Paul’s assurance, “God hath both raised up the 1 Cor. 6: 14.
 Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.”

The Resurrection of Christ: what a central place
 it holds in the redemptive act! It not only pro-
 claims the almightiness of Christ—His power over
 the grave, His triumph there: it seals and attests

the success of the atonement. It tells us of Christ's divine power by which He triumphantly carried to the Cross the sins of the world and nailed them there—and left them nailed there. The personal triumph is indeed great—the majesty with which He brake the bars of death and came victorious from the grave. But the triumph for us, and all our race, is the transcendent one: it exhibits the crowning purpose of the incarnation—the glorious end for which Christ died and rose: it enables us to say, “He nailed our sins to the accursed tree.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE ASCENDED LORD.

THERE is a chain of events in the life of Christ which cannot be broken. If we start with the Annunciation, and move step by step; the cross, the grave, the crown, are the inevitable outcome. They follow in perfect order: they answer, at every point, the purpose of Christ's earth-existence: they fit into human need and satisfy the nobler desires of the human heart: they are linked with an absoluteness that could emanate from none but the Infinite Mind: they move from everlasting to everlasting—deep calling unto deep: from the time-point of the Cross, they reach out into the two eternities—the one of eternal purpose, the other of unending effect. Viewed from either side, they face a light unto which no man may approach: for God is there.

Trace any great life from the cradle to the grave—for these mark the visible bounds of man's existence, they are the poles of human sight—and not a single one has its great successive facts so logically framed into a comprehensive whole, as has the life of Christ. Atheist and agnostic, philosopher and scientist, are spending their strength in pulling that blessed life to pieces. They stone Him, as did the Pharisees; but He passes through their midst unhurt. They crucify Him and seal the sepulchre; but He comes forth triumphant. They enact, throughout, the scenes of that dark day outside the city-gates,

when men reviled the Holy One of God: and with what result? The Psalmist foresaw it: "The kings Psalm 2: 2, 4. of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed: He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." Every man from Herod to Pilate has gone down to dust: their very names would have rotted had they not been linked with that devoted life. But Christ not only lives in the heavens: He lives and reigns in the hearts and lives of regenerated millions on earth. His enemies may put Him to death, they may eclipse His life for a time; but He shall rise, and ascend, and reign; and new conquests with new glories shall follow forever upon the Cross. The victories of God are everlasting and all-glorious victories.

In the life of Christ, there is almightiness all along the line. His conception and birth have something out of the common course of nature: there is a divine majesty in His words and works of mercy, truth and grace: at His death, a shudder passed through this earth and waked the dead: His resurrection was the act of the self-existent One. He that came forth from the Father and was come into the world; what remained, when He had finished the purpose of His earth-life, but to leave the world and go to the Father!

The Ascension of Christ—His visible departure from the midst of His disciples, is as well attested as any fact in all the history of the human race.

There could be no other outcome to such a life: it was the logical end of all antecedent events. It, therefore, must have the full attestation of Scripture. Let us now gather some of the evidence.

By His repeated prophesies, Jesus prepared His disciples for those awful scenes on Calvary's Height: He would also prepare them for that transcendent scene on the Mount of Olives. He coupled the two events in those mysterious words, "A little while, John 16: 16 and ye shall see me: and again, a little while and ye shall not see me; because I go to the Father:" delicate hints of His crucifixion and ascension—enough for the time. The first suggestion, however, of the full scope of His life, He gave to Nicodemus in that interview by night: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, John 3: 13. even the Son of Man which is in heaven." This was the starting-point of the great Ascension theme: it embodied the general fact in a general way, aside from all historic significance.

There is more than a hint when Jesus discusses with His disciples the mysteries of His life: there is a gentle leading up to the great ascension fact. He had declared Himself to be the bread of life—"The bread which cometh down from heaven that a John 6: 50. man may eat thereof and not die." And when His disciples murmured at it, He said, "Doth this John 6: 61,62. offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" The possibility, at least, of the Ascension is here implied.

As the public ministry of Christ drew to a close, we find that He becomes more specific in His references

- to His return to His Father's side. When the Pharisees sent soldiers to take Him, Jesus said, **John 7: 33.** "Yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto him that sent me." But they could not comprehend it. In that long dispute with the Pharisees, He expresses the same thought, "I go my way; and **John 8: 21.** ye shall seek me and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come." And when He would comfort His disciples at the prospect of His departure, He gives them the assurance, "In my **John 14: 2.** Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you:" words which have been the comfort of God's people in every age. He speaks once more before He suffers; and His statement takes away all doubt and fills His followers with the sublimest hope, "I came forth from the Father and **John 16: 28.** am come into the world: again, I leave the world and go to the Father." And this includes the whole round of His eternal existence: all that remains is to give the promise its historic place.

Meantime, the great theme was the Cross, and His death there; the grave, and His triumph over it. The disciples needed to be prepared for these two momentous events. But when that first "little while" was completed, Jesus spent the second "little while" in preparing them for the fulfilment of the **John 16: 10.** promise, "I go to my Father and ye see me no more." And so, after the Resurrection, His tone becomes positive; His language is stript of all indefiniteness: and He sends His disciples the plain, unmistakable message, "I ascend unto my Father,

and your Father; and to my God, and your God." John 20: 17.
 Here is definite speech: it is, at once, a prophecy and a promise; and its fulfilment is as well authenticated as any other fact to which history asks assent.

There are three accounts of the Ascension: the one is given by St. Mark; the other two, by St. Luke. Each embodies a simple statement, with the force of conviction underlying it. After laying stress upon the fact of the Resurrection and mentioning the names of some of those who were witnesses that Jesus was once more alive, St. Mark states the commission and the promise of Christ: he then sums up the Ascension in one brief sentence: "After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up Mark 16: 19. into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." There is no apology; there is no explanation; there is no effort to persuade: it is given without comment as a simple statement of fact.

The first account of St. Luke closes the Gospel which he wrote: the second is his introduction to the Acts of the Apostles. In the former, he says, "He led them out as far as Bethany; and he Luke 24: 50, 51 lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." In the latter, he lays special stress upon the fact that Jesus had shown Himself alive after His Passion, by many infallible proofs, going in and out among them for the space of forty days. And then, appointing them to be His witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth, "while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud Acts 1: 9. received him out of their sight." Henceforth,

the Ascension was inseparable from the Apostolic doctrine.

The disciples tarried in Jerusalem, waiting for the promised outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Peter stood up in their midst: there was a great glowing thought in his heart, and he must express it. He spoke of the transgression of Judas, and showed how he had forfeited his Apostolic place. He then proposed that they should fill the office, and laid down the law which should govern the choice:

Acts 1: 21, 22. "Wherefore, of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his Resurrection." And so, while he made the Resurrection the central point, the witness must reach both ways—back to the beginning of the ministry of Christ, His formal entrance into office; and on to its very close, when they stood and gazed as the cloud received Him out of their sight.

And now came the day of Pentecost, with its wonderful gift of tongues. In his defence of himself and his fellow-disciples against the charge that they were full of new wine, Peter makes the marvellous event center upon the Ascension of Christ,

Acts 2: 33. "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Thus, throughout, the Ascension is linked with the great historic events

in the life of Christ: and the proof of its reality was the great Pentecostal gift of tongues.

The Apostle Paul everywhere speaks with equal assurance. He deals with the Ascension as a settled fact, an essential part in the series of saving events. And he writes specifically about it. Wherefore he saith, "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." These are words of prophecy which he freely quotes. And that there might be no mistake as to the personality in their fulfilment, he applied them directly to Christ, "Now, that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." This is in exact accord with the Gospel statement.

There is nothing in all literature more sublime than St. Paul's summary of the round of Christ's redeeming work, when he makes the appeal, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue

should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

And in his Epistle to Timothy, he gives the shortest possible outline, with the Ascension as the culminating point: “God was manifest in the flesh, **I Tim. 3: 16.** justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” Such was the testimony of the man who stood by when Stephen was stoned, and who, we may safely assume, heard his witness, “**I Acts 7: 56.** see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God:” the testimony of him around whom there shone a great light from heaven, and to whom there spake that voice, “I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.”

The Epistle to the Hebrews takes up the same exalted theme: “God hath in these last days spoken **Heb. 1: 1-3.** unto us by his Son; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.” Upon the fact of the Ascension is based the appeal, **Heb. 4: 14.** “Seeing, then, that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” And so, to emphasize the priestly office of Christ, the same Epistle makes the Ascension an essential part of the divine scheme: “Neither by the blood of goats and **Heb. 9: 12.** calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemp-

tion for us." And again, the direct statement is made, "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." In short, the entire Epistle, presenting Christ as the High Priest of good things to come, bases everything upon the fact that He entered into the Holy of holies above. Heb. 10: 12.

The Epistles of the New Testament are all written with reference to the ascended Christ. St. Peter says that God raised Him up from the dead, and I Peter 1: 21. gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. He speaks definitely of "the resurrection I Peter 3: 22. of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being subject unto him." St. John's Epistles, without the Ascension, would have neither spirit nor life—they are meaningless apart from it; while the Apocalypse gives us repeated glimpses of the One who was dead, but is alive for ever more—heavenly glimpses of Him who says, "I am set Rev. 3: 21. down with my Father in his throne."

Here, then, we have a plain series of historic statements which culminate in the Ascension of Christ—an event implied in the Old Testament prophecies and crowned by New Testament fulfilment. There can be no reasonable ground of dispute. The disciples were witnesses to it; the Apostles preached it; the Holy Church throughout all the world confesses it as a glorious fact. The tests of science cannot touch it: the sphere of philosophy falls short of it. And he who deliberately

sets it aside or denies it—upon him shall rest the condemnation of the Apocalypse, “If any man shall
Rev. 22: 19. take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life.”

The man who denies the miraculous advent of our Lord, cannot but deny His miraculous departure: to do otherwise were intellectual suicide. To him, there is no evidence but the evidence of the senses, the evidence of experience, the evidence of so-called rational thought. And so, he classes the Ascension with the physical impossibilities, and thus dismisses the case. He either discards the Scripture account of it or he rationalizes it out of existence. It is only where the Scripture principle has become a settled conviction of the heart that a man can say, “Thy Word is Truth.” To the man who believes in Christ, the miracle of nature is as marvellous as the miracle of grace. To him, the spiritual comprehension of spiritual things is as rational as the natural comprehension of natural things. The thought of the spiritual man, therefore, along spiritual lines is as rational as the thought of the natural man along natural lines. And in all the universe of thought, there is nothing more rational than the plan of redeeming love, of which the Ascension is a truly rational part.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ENTHRONED KING.

THERE were moments in the life of Christ that were wondrously sublime—moments that transcend the supremest glories of mortal existence. Among the most sublime was that scene in the upper chamber, just before He crossed Kidron to enter Gethsemane—a scene in such striking contrast to that enacted there. The terrible events were not hid from His eyes: the solemn institution of the Holy Supper is proof of it. And now, with His disciples gathered around Him, He would fortify His heart for the awful issue. Lifting His eyes to heaven, He sends up that prayer which stands a challenge to human doubt as to the divinity of His nature and His eternal equality with Him who sits upon the throne; and He claims His place there. Mark the deep solemnity of the moment, and hear His confident tone, “Father, glorify thou John 17:5. me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” Let men debate as they please; let them read out of these words their evident sense: the fact remains that the mind of Jesus was clear on this point—He was conscious that His was an eternal existence, equal with the Father in majesty and might; and He confidently declared it. No one but God manifest in the flesh would dare to utter words like these: human lips are unclean in God’s sight.

The remarkable nature of these words becomes evident by contrast. The Patriarchs never had such visions with respect to themselves. The Prophets nowhere make themselves co-equal and co-eternal with the God who reigns above. The Apostles never represent themselves as other than the servants of Christ. In each instance, there was genuine humility of heart—an acknowledgment that God is supreme, before whom they were but dust and ashes. But Jesus, the meekest of all, the humblest of all, the lowliest of all: Jesus, who emphasized by precept the crowning virtue of the Christian life; who taught His Apostles the great lesson of humility by washing their feet; who warned them against seeking the higher places: Jesus lifts up His eyes toward heaven and claims His place on the eternal throne! There is only one way to reconcile His character and conduct; and that is, to confess with the beloved disciple, "This is the true God and eternal Life."

The Church does not speculate on this point: it makes no guesses. It takes Christ at His word: it judges the unseen by the seen, the incomprehensible by the comprehensible, the unknown by the known. Rom. 1:20. Moreover, it finds the verification of Christ's words in the testimony of the Apostles. These men were as thoroughly convinced of Christ's session at the right hand of God, as they were of the great facts of His life to which they were direct witnesses. Nay, was not the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost its visible evidence?

Besides, they had the witness of the Spirit in their hearts.

The manifestation of Jesus to His disciples in His person and office, follows the direct line of historic sequence. His session on the throne, therefore, is one of a series beginning with His divine appointment as the Saviour of our race, and moving on till He comes in glory to Judgment. Each incident in the chain of events is brought to the front at the proper time and place: in each case, He could say to His disciples, "Now I tell you before it come, John 13: 19. that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he." And so, upon the fact of the Ascension follows the announcement of the place He occupies in the kingdom above. In short, so intimately are they associated, that they seem but parts of one great act.

Here as elsewhere, a passing event was made the occasion of the announcement. The rich young ruler had come to Christ with the great question of eternal life: and the answer had sent him away sorrowful. It was this that led Jesus to say, "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." And this, in turn, led Peter to raise the question, "Behold, we have left all and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" Then came the reply, "Matt. 19: 28. Ye which have followed me, in the re-generation when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Aside from all dispute relative to the Judgment—the time, its nature, the scope—the plain fact is here given:

Jesus sits on the throne of His glory. No scholastic issue can cloud it.

The Parable of the last Judgment distinctly states the same fact—a fact which stands as a preface to that last solemn event, “When the Son of Man Matt. 25: 31, 32 shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.” Here, again, it is not only implied that Jesus has ascended into heaven; but that He has taken His place on the heavenly throne and will exercise the supreme authority that pertains to His kingly session there.

It was a solemn day in that blessed life, when Jesus stood before the High-priest and was compelled to declare, under oath, whether He was indeed the Christ, the Son of God. And then, to make His answer the more specific, to show that He was the Son of God in that sense in which the Jews understood it—“Equal with God,” and thus remove all doubt as to His divine nature, He uttered those words at which the High-priest rent his clothes, Matt. 26: 64. “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven:” words at which the High-priest might well rend his clothes, if Jesus were not truly God manifest in the flesh. And in harmony with this claim of Christ is the Gospel statement, “After Mark 16: 19. the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God”—

the statement of a man who spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost.

The Acts of the Apostles record the same crowning event. And they record it with all the confidence that is manifest in matters of which they were eyewitnesses. On the day of Pentecost, Peter took the words of David and applied them directly to Christ: "Therefore, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of Acts 2: 30. the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne:" and he bases all his argument upon Christ's resurrection and ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God—the very outpouring of the Holy Ghost being claimed as the proof of His presence there. The testimony of Stephen as He prayed for those who stoned him, brings out the same essential Scriptural fact: "Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man Acts 7 56. standing on the right hand of God." And this is a testimony that may not lightly be put aside.

The great Apostle to the Gentiles went forth with this fact as one of the leading inspirations of his life. In that ecstatic moment when the Christian's hope was his exalted theme, he brushed aside every earthly obstacle, and with unbounded assurance—an assurance which marked the deep conviction of his heart, he swept the limits of saving grace, "It Rom. 8: 34. is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." When he treats of our election and adoption by grace, he dwells upon

the working of God's mighty power, "which he
 Eph. 1: 20, 21 wrought in Christ when he raised him from the
 dead and set him at his own right hand in the
 heavenly places; far above all principality, and
 power, and might, and dominion, and every name
 that is named, not only in this world, but also in that
 which is to come." And when he would have men set
 their affection on things above, he made this the
 center of their gaze, "If ye then be risen with Christ,
 Col. 3: 1. seek those things which are above, where Christ
 sitteth on the right hand of God." Not only the
 Cross, but the Crown, was an essential part of St.
 Paul's doctrine.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is full of the subject.
 There the priestly office of Christ is the one absorb-
 ing theme. Hence, in the introductory verses, the
 eternal Son holds the central place; and the declara-
 tion with respect to Him is that when He had by
 Himself purged our sins, He "sat down on the
 Heb. 1: 3. right hand of the majesty on high." In summing
 up the things that pertained to the priesthood of
 Christ, the sacred writer places as the preface, "We
 Heb. 8: 1. have such an High-priest, who is set on the right
 hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." In
 comparing the priesthood of Christ with that of the
 ancient covenant, he brings out the same thought,
 Heb. 10: 12. "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for
 sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."
 And once more, in his exhortation to faith and
 patience and godliness of life, he makes the appeal,
 Heb. 12: 1, 2. "Let us run with patience the race that is set be-
 fore us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of

our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." These are all positive statements; but no more positive than Jesus Himself made.

The theme of St. Peter on the day of Pentecost is taken up in his Epistles, which were probably written near the close of his life. Here he gives the doctrinal setting of the resurrection of Christ, "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." And St. John, in the Revelation that was committed unto him as unto a faithful witness, gives proof of his fidelity when he writes of Christ's promise to the Churches: "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." That surely is specific—that message of the glorified Christ.

And without this specific fact, the entire Book of Revelation lacks purpose and effect. It is only the acknowledgment that Jesus sits on the right hand of the majesty on high, that gives force to the words of the Apostle, as well as comfort to God's people in every age, "They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." And when the Book closes with that beautiful description of the river of life, "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of

I Pet. 3: 22.

Rev. 3: 21.

Rev. 7: 16, 17.

Rev. 22: 1.

God and of the Lamb:" what comfort is there in words like these, if this is but a pretty sentiment!

If the words of Christ, therefore, carry any weight, His session at the right hand of God is a certified fact. It gave assurance to the Apostles through all the ministry of their lives. It gave new assurance to St. John on Patmos, when he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind him a great voice, as of a trumpet. It was the voice of Jesus, and His words were these: "I am Alpha
Rev. 1: 11, 18. and Omega, the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore." It was Christ's closing revelation directly from the heavenly throne.

And what is man that he should deny this divine message? What is it that keeps men from bowing to Jesus as the One who is, and who was, and who is to come: what but intellectual pride? What is poor human reason that it should aspire to lay hold on infinities? Man whose breath is in his nostrils—what is he that he should think himself capable of searching out the deep things of God? To study the stars, man resorts to the telescope: to study germ-life, he makes use of the microscope: to do a work which demands superhuman strength, he uses some mechanical device that his fertile brain has been able to invent. These are finite things: and for their understanding and use, man employs finite instrumentalities. And when it comes to infinite things, shall he not make use of infinite instrumentalities? The finite mind cannot lay hold

of God's infinitudes: the means to comprehend them must come from the Infinite One. And so, the light of infinite truth shines into finite hearts: it is at once the spiritual microscope and telescope, to reveal spiritual things both small and great.

Who by searching can find out God? "What I Cor. 2:11. man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God—they are foolishness unto him: he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Who by searching can find out man? Man cannot find the principle of life—not even of his own life; but he does not deny its existence: he knows it exists, because it is manifest in the sphere of nature. But men will deny the vital principles of the religion of Christ, although these are everywhere manifest in the sphere of grace.

The life of Christ, as witnessed by men who died rather than deny its essential nature: the life of Christ, as they preached it and lived it, made the resurrection an absolutely necessary outcome. Death could have no dominion over Him: it was not possible for Him to be holden of it. And He who thus arose, could not do otherwise than ascend: He who ascended, found His own proper place on the eternal throne. The resurrection and ascension are established by competent witnesses: these historic facts constitute the basis of our belief in His session at the right hand of God. He prophesied it; He promised it; He proved it by the outpouring of the

Holy Ghost. His disciples preached it as they did those things which they saw with their own natural eyes—so certain were they of it. And the Church in all its centuries has confessed it as an essential part of God's redemptive plan: And so, to-day, we sing with the Church of ancient date, "Thou art the

The

Te Deum.

King of glory, O Christ; Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GLORIOUS ADVENT.

IT is not my purpose to enter into a discussion on the second coming of Christ—when it shall be, or what shall be its mode and effect; but simply to point out the Scriptural assurance of the fact, and the one logical conclusion that must be drawn from it. There is much speculation along this line; but speculation brings no spiritual profit. To pry into the future is not always wise: it may even be hurtful. The impulsive disciple was gently rebuked for unwarranted meddling with coming events. He said, “Lord, and what shall this man do?” And the answer was, “If I will that he tarry till I come, John 21: 21, 22 what is that to thee? Follow thou me.” The great thing, after all, is to follow Christ, not anticipate Him. For where we attempt to read our own thoughts into the future, we may get as far away from the truth as did the disciples, when they concluded that John should not die.

A sad lesson is furnished us in the case of the Jews. They knew that the Messiah should come: it was so prophesied. They knew that He should sit upon the throne: it was so prophesied. And then they began to speculate. And the more they speculated, the farther they got from the truth and the less prepared were they to receive Christ when He actually came. Had they been satisfied with the

promise and not meddled with the mode of fulfilment, they never would have heard those words of sorrowful doom, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

There is, indeed, much that we may safely infer both from prophecy and fulfilment relative to the glorious Advent of Christ; but we should be very careful as to our inferences, and we must draw a clear line between theory and fact. We are dealing with a great essential part of the redemptive scheme, and we dare not speculate about it. In considering this subject, therefore, let us lay the foundation in the positive statements of Christ and build upon it the inspired declarations of the Apostles. Let us confine ourselves to Scripture: let us ship clear of unproductive philosophies.

We cannot separate the great events of Christ's life: they are joined into a perfect whole. They are like a chain: take up a single link, and you take up the entire chain with it. And so, when Jesus foretold His death and resurrection, He leaped the chasm of time and assumed His glorious Advent:

Luke 9: 26. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." "For the Son

Matt. 16: 27. of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works." The certainty of Christ's coming and its purpose are set forth as a settled fact. And yet, what He here claims as His special

prerogative, belongs to God and none else: no angel, no man surely, may lay claim to such a divine right.

The awful events coupled with the final Advent, are the common theme of Scripture. The prophet Joel writes, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2: 31. The questions of Amos make the truth the more emphatic, "Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" Amos 5: 20. Isaiah takes up the same theme, "The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." Isa. 13: 10. And Ezekiel likewise: "I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light." Ezek. 32: 7.

And now Jesus takes up the same solemn theme: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24: 29,30 And this is prefaced by the statement, "As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." Matt. 24: 27. And as to the purpose of His coming: "He shall send his angels, and shall gather together his

Mark 13: 27. elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." There is no other name than the name of God that fits into these events: yet it is Jesus who thus comes with glory and great might. Wondrous facts in the history of the Anointed One!

And these facts which Christ so clearly taught, became the theme of the Apostles. It could not be otherwise. For as they stood on the Mount of Olives, when their Lord was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight, God's messenger came with the promise, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Link this with the promise of Christ, "I go to prepare a place for you: I will come again and receive you unto myself:" link these, and what could occupy their thoughts more than His promised return—a visible one, a personal one; as His going into heaven had been personal and visible!

It is charged against St. Paul, by the enemies of the New Testament, that he moulded Christian thought with respect to Christ. If this means that he preached his own notions about Christ, the charge has no foundation in fact. If it means, however, that he laid hold of the essential elements in Christ's life and so set them before the world that men could not get away from the truth he taught, the charge is true; and St. Paul would have been false to the commission that Christ gave him had he taught otherwise. And there is no truth to which he returned

more frequently and with greater show of confidence, than the truth of Christ's return to take His people home

In his letter to the Church at Corinth, he assumes the expectant attitude, as if the event were a thing of immediate prospect. And he holds them to the same hope when he writes, "Waiting for the 1 Cor. 1: 7, 8. the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." And then he pleads for unity, so that united they may be ready for the coming of Christ. In the same letter, he gives a new significance to the Lord's Supper, when he adds to the words of institution, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. 11: 26.

In his Epistle to the Philippians, he pleads for consistency of life. And in his contemplation of Christian excellence, he rises above passing temporalities—the things of flesh and sense. Taking into view the completed outcome of human existence, he bases his exhortation on eternal realities, "For our conversation is in heaven, Phil 3: 20, 21. from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." And when he would call men away from responding to the lower impulses of nature, he directs their thoughts above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God: and there he would keep our gaze, with the assurance,

Col. 3: 4. "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The central thought of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, is the expected coming of Christ: all else circles about it. In his greeting, the Apostle shows how they were turned from idols to serve the living God: and with this end in view. "To wait
 I Thess. 1: 10. for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." He next takes a lofty view of the Apostolic office—not temporal gain but the glory of the outcome. And to emphasize it, he raises the question, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?" To which he makes reply, "Are
 I Thess. 2: 19. not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" His prayer in behalf of the disciples at Thessalonica has a like thought:
 I Thess. 3: 12, 13. "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you; to the end that he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." And when he writes to them with respect to the dead who sleep in Jesus, he tells them not to sorrow as those who have no hope. Then he draws that picture of the glorious Advent,
 I Thess. 4: 16, 17. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be

with the Lord"—words which have no meaning, much less comfort, if Christ be not risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. And finally, the Epistle closes with the benediction, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and ^{I Thess. 5:23.} I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus from beginning to end, this letter dwells distinctly and without doubt upon the prophetic word, "The Son of Man cometh in the ^{Mark 8:38.} glory of his Father with the holy angels."

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians has a like end in view; though new considerations play an important part. The terrors of the event are there pictured, as well as the glories that attend it. The children of God suffer for the kingdom of Christ; but there will be a recompense,—a recompense to him who brings persecution, as well as to him who endures it. And so the Apostle says, "It is a righteous thing with ^{II Thess. 1:6-10.} God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you that are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." And then, realizing the profound effect of such an announcement, the Apostle adds a word of warning, "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our ^{II Thess. 2:1, 2.} Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together

unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." The same spirit marks the close of the
 11 *Thess.* 3: 5. Epistle, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ."

In his Epistle to Timothy, where he urges upon his young disciple the great principles of faith and practice, the same essential fact is kept in view: "I
 1 *Tim.* 6: 13,14 give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things; and before Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." And in his injunction to Titus as to doctrine and life, he holds forth the blessed outcome,
Titus 2: 13. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

In like spirit and with like import, St. John the Divine writes; "Behold, he cometh with clouds:
Rev. 1: 7. and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." And the Book closes with these significant words, "He which testifieth these things
Rev. 22: 20. saith, Surely, I come quickly!" And that there may be no mistake as to the person who thus testifies, the ready response springs from the beloved
Rev. 22: 20. disciple's heart, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The theme of Christ's glorious Advent, therefore, has a very large place in the system of Apostolic doctrine.

In all the range of history, is there a single fact supported by such evidence and conviction and uniformity of statement, as is the glorious coming of Christ? He held it forth to His disciples as the steadfast center of their hope. They held it up to their followers as the strong incentive to a godly life. And it can no more be severed from the history of our Lord, than can any incident from the manger to the cross. It belongs to an unbroken and unbreakable system that includes the two eternities: it has a vital place in that life which reaches both ways into the endless years of God. The life of Christ, like the garment He wore, is woven without seam; and none but the hand of sacrilege would venture to sever it. The second Advent is as certain a coming event, as His first Advent is a settled fact.

And who is He that is thus from everlasting to everlasting: He who holds the morning stars in His hand: He at whose presence the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light: Who is He? Is He but a man with a man's finite might? What an impossible creature such a man would be! But if He who claims this glorious Advent be the eternal God, stooping to our estate, then all these declarations of Scripture fit together into a consistent account of the consummation of God's mission among men for their eternal redemption and final exaltation into heavenly places.

If Jesus is not what the Scriptures declare, and what the Church uniformly confesses Him to be: The Nicene Creed.
 "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God;" then the Bible is a series of fables without

point or effect, and the millions upon millions who have believed in it as the revelation of God in Christ, have been the most deluded creatures of the most stupendous fraud that was ever foisted upon the human race! We are not quite ready for so sweeping a charge.

We prefer to believe that all Scripture was given by inspiration of God, and that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Then every statement that touches upon the life of Christ, from the starting-point of the redemptive scheme to its consummation when He shall come in glory to take His redeemed ones home: every such statement is not the incoherent mutterings of fallible men, but the infallible utterances of the everliving God. And so, we once more confess

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with the Ancient Church, "We believe that Thou shalt come."

CHAPTER XV.

THE ETERNAL JUDGE.

THE plan of salvation, as prophesied in the Old Testament and proclaimed in the New, assumes that Jesus is the Son of God; and that He is the Son of God in one specific sense, God the Son. These terms are interchangeable: they belong to Jesus Christ alone; they apply to no one else. "Emmanuel: God with us," was the announcement of His birth: and every act of His life, every claim of His life, proves the truth of it. His was not the common course of human existence: there was something about Him different from any man before or since His lowly Advent. And this difference was not one of degree: it was an essential difference. His words were not human words: never man spake like this man. His acts were not human acts: it was never so seen in Israel; it was never so seen elsewhere on the face of the earth.

If we recognize only the human element in Christ, we are mystified beyond measure: aye, we would pronounce the Gospel a cunningly devised fable. If we acknowledge the divine element of His nature, then His life is a marvellous unit, an inseparable unit: prophecy and fulfilment meet: the eternal ages unite in an unending circle of which the earth-segment of the Christ-life is a glorious part. From throne to throne; and after that the judgment.

Time shall be no more: the temporal will be past; the eternal estate shall have come: in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be. It is a solemn fact for the human soul to contemplate: it should put deep seriousness into men's lives.

There is no guesswork in the history of Christ. The Judgment is described with the same assurance as the commonest event of His life. It could not be otherwise when holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In either case, infinite or finite, there is the reverent handling of facts: the least thing, therefore, becomes great and the greatest becomes least, because almightiness is associated with it. The meanest creature that crawls in the dust is great in proportion as we realize that God in His almightiness made it. An atom is as wonderful as an angel: God spake, and it was done: aside from His omnipotence, neither could exist.

We mortals get the relative view, not the essential one. We measure things according to size, complexity, and the like. The Judgment is tremendous in our eyes, because we are tremendously related to it. And yet, it is but one of a multitude of almighty acts—the culminating one. Because it deals with the infinite outcome, it has a sublimity that transcends, to mortal gaze, all acts of mere temporal interest. And since it affects our eternal estate, we stand in awe of it.

The prophets wrote of “the great and the terrible day of the Lord.” In that Old Testament Book

which looks so clearly into the last times, the statement is made, "The judgment was set, and the books were opened." In short, in a multitude of instances, there is direct or indirect reference to the last great day, the Day of Judgment. And so, when Jesus makes mention of it, He moves within prophetic lines. Dan. 7: 10.

He but emphasizes the certainty of the event when He speaks those words of doom, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." And when He would teach men that the heart measures the life, that it is the source whence flows the good or bad in word and deed, He pronounces those words of solemn import, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." The certainty of that day, in His divine thought, was as fixed as any actualized fact: there could be no doubt with respect to it. Matt. 11: 23, 24.

He gives us a nearer view of this subject when He upbraids the people for their unbelief. He had just uttered those seeming anomalies which are quite incomprehensible aside from the divinity of His nature: "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me: He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me." And then He uttered those words that are altogether divine, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him" Matt. 12: 44, 45.

not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

The first Advent was an advent of mercy: the last Advent will be an Advent of Judgment. And to him who rejects Christ's words of mercy, there remaineth nothing but words of judgment. It is a terrible thought, to think that the way we treat Christ's words here, will settle the way He will deal with us there: a terrible thought that now we are sealing our judgment.

But Jesus has not left us without definite testimony on this point. Early in His ministry, He gave the warning word: "Not every one that saith **Matt. 7: 21.** unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And then He announces the awful fact, "Many will say to me in **Matt. 7: 22, 23** that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity." These are prophetic words: they mark a solemn scene before Christ's judgment seat.

The Jews sought to kill Jesus because He said that God was His Father, thus making Himself equal with God. In His defence, He maintains His position and shows what it further involves: "As

the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth John 5: 21. them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Here is an equality, not only in omnipotence, but in the honor that results from it. And then as an additional ground on which to base His claim, He adds, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath John 5: 22, 23 committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." And to remove all doubt; to show His self-existence in the unity of the two natures, and the part that is committed to Him in view of it, He makes the additional statement, "As the Father John 5: 26, 27 hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself: and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man." Son of God and Son of Man on the eternal throne as Judge!

Jesus would put His disciples in the expectant attitude: "Watch, for ye know not what hour Matt. 24: 42. your Lord doth come:" "Take heed to yourselves; lest that day come upon you unawares:" "Watch Luke 21: 34, 36 and pray, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." The whole teaching of Christ had in view the preparation of His disciples for the day of Judgment: "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with Matt. 16: 27. his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Thus he openly claims that which belongs distinctively to God's office.

The Apostles—men who companied with Him all

the time, from the baptism of John till the day He was taken up: these Apostles bear witness that Christ declared Himself to be the eternal Judge. And Peter claims that Christ commissioned them to make special proclamation of it: "He com-
Acts 10: 42. manded us to preach unto the people and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." This was the culminating point: the point on which they set their gaze; the point of hope, of assurance, of comfort, of peace. This was the basis of that peace which they preached by Jesus Christ. And to have the loving Saviour as our final Judge, is the crowning comfort of the Christian life.

The Apostle Paul, whom the exalted Christ taught the way of life, never lost sight of the Judgment. He plainly says, "As many as have sinned in the
Rom. 2: 12, 16 law, shall be judged by the law; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." When he calls men away from uncharitable judgment, he lifts into view, as the great constraining influence, the last Judgment: "We shall all stand
Rom. 14: 10. before the judgment-seat of Christ." In his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, he is equally plain and specific, "We must all appear before the
II Cor. 5: 10. judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." When he enjoins Timothy to preach the Word, he draws him up to the very bar of God:
II Tim. 4: 1. "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and

the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." And then, urging upon him to make full proof of his ministry, he assumes the triumphant tone, as he realizes that the time of his departure is at hand: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." And so clear was his vision of it, and so absolutely certain in his eyes, that he sums his conviction in those words which Christ Himself had used to designate it, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." And so here, as elsewhere, St. Paul but repeats what Christ before had taught. He was a faithful Apostle; while those who claim the Christian name, but deny the Christian faith, are Apostates: they are worse—they are false to every fundamental principle of faith and life.

The beloved disciple had the same profound conviction; and on proper occasion he expressed it. In that sweet fatherly tone which marks his Epistles, he says, "And now, little children, abide in him: that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment."

The love, the confidence, the trust: these shine out in the gentle words that hint of judgment to come, with Christ in the judgment-seat. No one but he who leaned on Jesus' breast could have written words such as these.

The closing Book of the New Testament is in perfect accord with all that Christ had taught in His earthly life-time, and all that the Apostles had declared in His name. Jesus now speaks from the heavenly throne—the Lamb in the midst of it. Shall we not, as those who serve Him day and night, fall prostrate at His feet! He addresses the Seven Churches. To one of them He gives the promise, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will
 Rev. 2: 10. give thee a crown of life.” To another He utters the solemn warning, “Remember, therefore,
 Rev. 3: 3. how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” In that great and notable day of the Lord, the heavens shall depart, and every mountain and island shall be moved out of their place: and the mighty men of the earth, the bond and free, shall cry to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us
 Rev. 6: 16, 17. from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come.” And among His last messages is this remarkable one, “Behold, I come
 Rev. 22: 12, 13, quickly; and my reward is with me, to give
 16. every man according as his work shall be.” “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,

the first and the last." "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches: I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star."

The Apocalypse is, indeed, full of mysteries: it may require the last times to solve many of them—to come to a clear comprehension of all that they involve. But here the revelation is unmistakable. Jesus the Root of David, the God who created David: Jesus the Branch of David, the Man who descended from David—David's Lord and David's Son! Jesus, God and Man: God, begotten of the Father from eternity; and Man, born of the Virgin Mary! Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last: from everlasting to everlasting, God! Jesus the Judge!

Judgment belongs only to God: besides Him there is none else. When Abraham interceded for Sodom, he said, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right!" Gen. 18: 25. When Moses sang his song of praise, in which he recorded God's mercy and vengeance, this was the central theme, "The Lord shall judge his people." Deut. 32: 36. When Hannah's heart rejoiced in the Lord, these were the words that swelled her song of praise: "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth." 1 Sam. 2: 10. David's song was ever the same: "The Lord reigneth: he cometh to judge the earth." 1 Chron. 16 31, 33. And when the harvest of the world is come, the angel shall cry with a loud voice, "Fear

Rev. 14: 7. God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." And so, throughout, we have the uniform testimony of Scripture, "God is the Judge."

God is Judge: Jesus is Judge. So the Scriptures tell us; and so we believe. And yet there are not two Judges: there is but one Judge. Is there conflict here? None in the least: none, if we believe the Word of God, as Prophets and Apostles declare it: none if we acknowledge the truth of the Gospel statement, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." And receiving this as God's message, we once more confess with the Ancient Church, "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge."

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SON OF MAN.

THE name which Jesus gives Himself is a strange, perplexing name; a name so simple, yet so comprehensive; a name which has been a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence: The Son of Man. It was the name of His choice: He loved it above all other names. It is practically a new name: no one else ever assumed it: no one else ever called Him by it. In its use, therefore, He stands distinctly alone.

It is true, the Lord addresses the prophets by the name, "Son of man;" but it was expressive of the human side of the prophet sphere. And there is one specific case in the Old Testament where this strangely significant name is used, and only one. In the night visions, Daniel beheld one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. And *Dan. 7: 13, 14.* there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom: His dominion an everlasting dominion; His kingdom one that should not be destroyed. This is prophetic of Christ: it could refer to no one else. And in the New Testament there is a single reference, and only one. It, too, was a vision. It came to Stephen as he looked steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing there. And he said, "Behold, *Acts 7: 56.* I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man

standing on the right hand of God." And he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This Son of Man, therefore, was none other than Christ. These are the only two instances in all Scripture where any one, other than Jesus, makes use of this name. And in both these instances, the one of prophecy, the other of fulfilment, the name is applied to Him.

It was the people who raised the question, "Who John 12: 34. is this Son of Man?" They raised it because Jesus had applied it to Himself as the Christ. And that is the question men have been asking down through the ages. If we would get the right answer, we must go to Christ for it. And in taking up His answers, we may divide them into three classes: those which show His wants because of His human nature; those which set forth His might in view of His divine nature; and those which show the majesty of the human-divine as He sits in His heavenly throne.

The life of Christ has its representative human side—a side which makes Him one with us, our kinsman according to the flesh. There is more than a picture of the deep humiliation of His life: there is a summing up of the entire human estate when He says, "The foxes have holes, and the Matt. 8: 20. birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." He does not compare Himself with those who dwell in kings' houses; not even with those who live in huts: the point of contrast does not lie there. "Foxes have holes"

—the clefts in the rocks furnish them a safe retreat: “The birds of the air have roosting-places”—any branch will serve them as a perch for the night. Every earth-creature has a natural earth-place of rest; “but the Son of Man” the great representative of the human race, “hath not where to lay his head.” That figures exactly the human estate: man has no natural earth-home; he must build his own time-abode. We are strangers and pilgrims as were all our fathers: here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. And He who dwells in that house not made with hands, not only assumed our nature, but He also accepted our estate: the Son of Man, with no earth-home, no time-abode. He not only assumed our homeless estate, but He lived without a home. What self-abandonment!

Not only in our universal homeless earth-estate did He become like us, but He became a partaker in all the conditions of life. It was He who said, “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine Matt. 11: 19. bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.” He thus shared the common wants of life; nor did He escape the common evil tongue. Everywhere, we find the same human estate: “The Son of Man Matt. 17: 22, 23 shall be betrayed into the hands of men; and they shall kill him:” “The Son of Man must suffer Mark 9: 12. many things and be set at naught:” “The Son Mark 10: 45. of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” These all mark common human conditions. Aside from all saving significance, they

represent our common human lot: to eat and drink, to labor and suffer and die. And these instances, and others like these, prove that Jesus Christ was in all such points like ourselves, having all the sinless wants of our nature.

In the entire round, therefore, of His humiliation, He stands before us pre-eminently the Son of Man. With that mysterious name and nature, He entered into human joys; with it, He passed through human sorrows. Hunger and thirst were His, weariness and loneliness of life. The hatred of men weighed upon His heart; their love and trust were a delight before His eyes. Up in the mountain He prayed; out in the desert He fasted; down by the seaside He toiled; and as He stood by the grave of Lazarus He wept. Where in all the world has there come a personality so in touch with the heart and life of humanity as this Son of Man? His very name hallows every circumstance of life—an incentive to toil, a comfort in sorrow, a restraint amid pleasure: all sanctified by this transcendental earth-name, "The Son of Man."

And so, Jesus is one of us: His name, the Son of Man, designates it. Yet if we study His life—the mere human side of it, we shall find that He is separate from us: He must be classed alone. The very fact that the Word of God and the Church of God emphasize the humanity of Christ, is a strong hint, if not a positive proof, that there is another side to His nature. In all the literature of the ages, no man ever tried to establish his humanity

or even, aside from special instances, to emphasize it. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, historians like Heroditus and Livy, poets like Homer and Horace, orators like Demosthenes and Cicero, generals like Alexander and Caesar: they never employed terms by which to lay stress upon the fact that they were men of like passions with ourselves. But in the case of Jesus it is different: He kept His humanity distinctly in view; at every possible point He urged it. The divine side of His life shone out so strongly that it was necessary, at every turn, to hold up the human side, and to designate it by a distinctive human name when the divine attributes were manifest.

But as soon as we touch the divine side of His life, though the human is present, all idea of His humiliation and all expression relative to it, pass out of sight. He stands before us transfigured—"The Son of Man:" He stands in heavenly majesty and might. When He cured the man sick of the palsy, striking at the very source of sickness, He said, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." And when the scribes charged Him with blasphemy, His answer was, "But that ye may know that the Son of Matt. 9: 6. Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house." The Pharisees upbraided Him for allowing His disciples to pluck the ears of corn on the Sabbath day. His answer was, "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Matt. 12: 8. Jesus was guest with Zacchaeus. And He answered the murmurings of the people, "The Son of Man Luke 19: 10.

is come to seek and to save that which was lost." And elsewhere He makes clear the same fact by the prophetic figure, "And as Moses lifted up the
John 3: 14, 15. serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Who is this Son of Man: this man who has power on earth to forgive sins? this man who is Lord of the Sabbath? this man who has power to save? These are almighty acts: but Jesus, as the Son of Man, claims the right and the power to perform them. In Him, so complete was the personal union of the human and the divine, so perfect the oneness, that whatever is predicated of His humanity is also predicated of His divinity—not apart from His humanity, but in personal union with it: and whatever is predicated of His divinity is also predicated of His humanity—not apart from His divinity, but in personal union with it. The entire personality participates: the whole being, the God-man, everywhere takes part alike in human and divine acts.

There is another point from which to view this wonderful personality, the Son of Man. It is already implied in the words of Daniel, when he foretold the coming of His kingdom which shall bring down every opposing power, as well as His coming to judge: the one like the Son of Man. And now when Jesus comes, the fulfilment of prophecy, and reveals Himself in the new relation, He clings to the old name: He stills calls Himself the Son of Man. The human nature, therefore,

abides: it did not pass away in time; it will not pass away with time. The union of the two natures is an everlasting union: not fused into one; not attached by mere physical ties; distinct as body and soul are distinct; yet inseparably united, so that they constitute one person with two natures. And so, in the oneness and almightiness of this one personal existence, the Son of Man shall come in *Matt. 25: 31.* His glory; the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory: the Son of Man shall send His *Matt. 13: 14.* angels: authority hath been given Him to execute *John 5: 27.* judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

Who is this Son of Man? He sits on God's throne; He executes God's judgment; He takes to Himself God's kingdom and power and glory: and yet the Son of Man! The Son of Man who hungered and thirsted, who suffered and died—so perfect was His humanity here on earth: the Son of Man who forgave sins, who made Himself Lord of the Sabbath, who exercised God's saving power—so perfect was His divinity here on earth: this Son of Man, in the perfection of His two natures, takes His place on the heavenly throne; and there, the same Son of Man as He was here, He claims almighty attributes, fills almighty offices, and performs almighty acts. And what have we? The weakness of human nature and the majesty of the divine, manifested in His earthly life: the transfiguration of the human nature—its glorification with the divine, in which, by personal union, it shares in all its wisdom and glory and might! The ever-existent manhood in the infinite activities of

the Godhead—this is what Christ claims when, under relations that are absolutely divine, He calls Himself the Son of Man. And if anyone, in his inability to grasp a relation so far above human thought, should ask, “How can these things be,” let this answer suffice, “With God, nothing is impossible.”

And yet we can, in a measure, illustrate the infinite by the finite: the possibilities, at least, may be brought within the range of reasoning acceptance. Alloys, however, debase the precious metal, though they may enhance its value for current use. And comparisons between the natural and the spiritual tend to drag down the lofty theme; yet they sometimes serve as useful adjuncts in bringing to the comprehension great spiritual facts. But let us not forget Christ’s estimate of faith as over against sight: “Thomas, because thou hast seen
John 20: 29. me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

A few illustrations will serve our purpose: they are taken from everyday events. A man can ride sixty miles an hour; but he cannot walk it: the enabling power lies in the locomotive. And if the train could travel a thousand miles an hour, he could do the same. In short, the train limit of speed is his speed limit. A man cannot rise to mid-air by his unaided powers; but if he enters a balloon, he can rise as far as it can rise, and as fast. A man cannot, unaided, move over the surface of the water; but he can board a ship and sail the seas.

In other words, a man does human impossibilities by his connection with physical appliances. Their speed becomes his speed, their strength his strength, their acts his acts. And, let it be noted, his connection with these mechanical appliances is a purely physical one: it is one of outward relation; it is not one of life.

If a man, therefore, could link himself with an object of infinite speed, he could be everywhere present. If he could link himself with an object of infinite might, he could perform almighty acts. And so on, with all the round of infinitudes. In Jesus Christ, God and man are brought together: the relation is not a physical one; it is not a mere organic one: it is personal. The Son of Man in personal union with the Son of God, by that very fact is endowed with all the attributes of God. Is God omnipotent? The Son of Man is omnipotent. Is God omniscient? The Son of Man is omniscient. Is God omnipresent? The Son of Man is omnipresent. If our physical relation with some mechanical device gives us all the power and speed of that device, shall not the Son of Man, in the personal union of God and man, be able to assume every province and exercise every power of God? From what we see every day in physical life, is it not a most reasonable inference that this personal union must result in every attribute of God being manifest in the life of Christ? Must not the very claim of Jesus, "I and my Father are one," necessitate it!

It is a remarkable fact that Jesus nowhere argues

the case : He simply affirms and acts. He has power to forgive sins, because God and man are united in His life. He is Lord of the Sabbath, because in Him God and Man are one. And the natures of the God-man here on earth, the human and divine, are the natures of the God-man on the heavenly throne. The Son of Man, in the unity of His two natures, ascended into heaven : the Son of Man, in the unity of His two natures, sits on the right hand of God : the Son of Man, in the unity of His two natures, shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory : the Son of Man, in the unity of His two natures, shall be our Judge.

Two scenes rise into view—an earthly and a heavenly one : The Son of Man, God and Man, lifted up on Calvary's Cross ; the Son of Man, God and Man, seated on the throne to execute judgment. And in these two scenes we have an eternal interest : we must be saved by the Son of Man here, if we shall be able to stand before the Son of Man in judgment there.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SON OF GOD.

THOSE who discredit the divinity of Christ, are driven to great straits. They pervert Scripture; they deny evident fact; and when they reach the last ditch, they entrench themselves behind the weak negative, "Nowhere in the New Testament is it declared that Christ is God." If that were true, it would have no significance. An attribute proclaims what is back of it: it needs no label to declare it. The attributes of God are manifest in Christ: why, then, should He declare what is evident? A black man does not emphasize the fact that there is black blood in his veins: the surface shows it. And the surface of Christ's life declares His divinity in terms plainer than speech could make it. Self-revelation is the peculiar birth-right of all realities, whether in nature or grace.

If men do not want to believe in the Bible, they should declare themselves—not pretend to believe, on the surface, but deny in the heart. To twist its sense, to turn history into fable and idealize truth out of existence, to narrow or broaden the Word to fit their theories: this is neither scholarly nor honest. And this is the enemy that sows the tares,—something in the green that looks like wheat; but which, in the end, ripens into a harvest of hypocrisies and lies.

It is the favorite argument of the enemies of Christ, that Jesus is the Son of God in a broad human sense. We are the sons of God, they say, as well as was Jesus Christ—sons such as was He. They are willing to admit that Jesus was of a more perfect grade; but the relationship, they claim, is the same. And then they soar aloft in graceful flights of praise that humanity may reach so perfect a degree—a sample of the possibilities of our own ennobled selves! All of which would be very beautiful if it were true; but it is not true. Aye, it actually falls short of truth: for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. But this is a different thing from the state of nature; for the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. And its deceitfulness is nowhere more in evidence than in the human perversions of Holy Scripture—the fancies of the religious fadist.

The Scriptures call Jesus the Son of Man: they mean that He was true and perfect man. They call Him the Son of God: they mean that He was true and perfect God. The very logic of language compels the inference. The use of the former name implies the active presence of the human nature: the use of the latter name implies the active presence of the divine nature. In every instance, without exception, God is there—the sonship being expressive of the personal relation in the one divine essence. The name, The Son of God, takes us out of the sphere of human life: it brings us into the

realm of the divine. The Word of God, which is the rule of faith, abundantly establishes the truth of this statement.

The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost Luke 1: 35. shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." According to this message, Jesus was the Son of God because He was conceived by the Holy Ghost: that separates Him from every other mortal life. Such an announcement was never made in any other case. If we are the sons of God, in the sense in which Jesus was the Son of God, then this message has no meaning. But if this Son of God is God the Son, then the angel who stands in the presence of God would be the proper messenger to announce it.

The witness of John the Baptist is equally confirmative. He that sent him to baptize with water, the same said unto him, "Upon whom thou shalt John 1: 33, 34. see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And then he adds, "I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." If every man is a son of God in a higher or lower sense according to the integrity of his life, and Jesus is the highest simply because He is the purest and the best, these words of John have neither spiritual, moral, nor logical force: his voice is an empty voice. We believe otherwise. We believe as John meant it, "This is the Son of God"—specific, separate, the only One.

A very special kind of evidence is furnished by the evil spirits—the demons that manifest themselves through the wicked and the weak of our poor mortal race. There is the case of that man in the synagogue who was possessed of an unclean spirit and cried out, “I know thee who thou art, Mark 1: 24. the Holy One of God.” There are general cases where the unclean spirits, when they saw Jesus, fell down before Him and cried, “Thou art the Son of Mark 3: 11,12 God.” And Jesus charged them that they should not make Him known. There was the case of the Gadarenes, who cried out, “What have we Matt. 8: 29. to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” If this Son of God were but a man like ourselves, why should Jesus charge the evil spirits not to make Him known? Did He conspire with them to deceive the people? The Jews charged Him with being in league with the evil spirits; but the very fact that He cast them out shows that the charge was false. If this Son of God were but a man like ourselves, why did the evil spirits gnash on Him for coming to torment them before their time? They knew the just judgment of God and the appointed time—the bottomless pit at the end of the age. They saw the divine nature of Christ—not a son of God as we are, but God the Son: and they trembled at His Advent.

The Jews sought to kill Jesus because He said John 5: 18. that God was His Father, thus making Himself equal with God. When we call Him our Father, we do not make ourselves equal with God: where, then,

is the difference? These Jews knew what He meant when He claimed to be the Son of God: He meant that He was equal with God—God in fact. The Pharisees never claimed to be sons of God as He claimed it: it remained for modern Pharisees to claim it! They dethrone Christ: they enthrone themselves. But every orthodox Christian draws a distinct line: he believes that Jesus was the Son of God in the sense that He was God the Son; and he knows that his own sonship is a spiritual sonship through Christ. “Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God:” it was Peter who said it, and his Master did not rebuke him. “Of a truth, thou art the Son of God:” so said the disciples; and they worshipped Him. And when Jesus met the man whom the Pharisees had cast out of the synagogue, He asked, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” He answered and said, “Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on Him?” Jesus said unto him, “Thou hast both seen him and it is he that talketh with thee.” If Jesus was the Son of God in a human sense, these incidents have no foundation in fact: they are but old wives’ fables. Such are the extremes to which doubt drives the worldly wise.

In that dispute with the Jews in which He said, “I and my Father are one;” they took up stones a second time to stone Him, “Because,” said they, “that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” And Jesus reasoned with them, and repeated the very words because of which they would stone Him, “I am the Son of God.” In the minds of these Jews, therefore, “the Son of God” and

“God” were the same. And Jesus does not disclaim their inference: He rather acknowledges and emphasizes it.

We get their view of the case in their court of inquiry, just before they handed Him over to Pilate. There He called Himself the Son of Man; and Luke 22:66-71 they said, “Art thou, then, the Son of God?” In their thought, the two were one. And Christ confirmed their thought when He replied, “Ye say that I am.” Well might they cry out, “What need we any further witnesses!” And we might say the same, in an humble sense. He plainly claimed that He was God: we need no further proof to establish it. And this claim was the basis of their charge before Pilate: “He made himself the Son John 19: 7. of God.” They surely would not ask Pilate to crucify Him for claiming to be the Son of God in the sense that they might take that name to themselves; or as we apply it, through Christ, to ourselves. What supreme nonsense, therefore, for any man to say that Christ is the Son of God only in a little higher degree than we are! It makes the charge of the Jews the folly of the ages. It bases the crucifixion on a universal fact—a fact for which any man, in the universe of time, might be nailed to the cross. And yet, that is the nonsense and the folly of those who deny the divinity of Christ—His claim to it.

The crucifixion scene adds its testimony to the same truth. As He hung upon the Cross, they Matt. 27: 43. mocked Him: “He said, I am the Son of God.”

And when the centurion saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, he said, "Truly, this Matt. 27: 54. was the Son of God." It was not a son of God, such as we are by grace—it was God the Son that suffered and died there. And when those terrible scenes were past and Jesus again moved among His disciples, it was made a matter of record, that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of John 20: 31. God; and that believing we might have life through His name. Jesus tells us of His Sonship once more: it is comprised in His final commission, "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing Matt. 28: 19. them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." An equality is designated here: the terms are co-ordinate. If the Son were less than God; so would be the Father and the Holy Ghost: if the Father is God; so is the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The rules of speech demand it: the context proves the truth of it.

The Acts of the Apostles everywhere set forth the same. When Philip opened the Scripture to the chamberlain of Queen Candace, he said, "If thou Acts 8: 37. believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized." And he said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." When Saul of Tarsus was converted, "Straightway he preached Christ in Acts 9: 20. the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." The Apostles went everywhere preaching Christ. They did not preach about a man: like Paul on Mars' Hill, they preached their God. And when they proclaimed Christ as the Son of God, there could be

but one meaning attached to that name: The Son of God is God the Son! Any other inference is an utter perversion of the truth for which they suffered, and an out-and-out rejection of the foundation principle of that which they taught.

In his Epistles, St. Paul is equally definite. He writes with boundless confidence. His greeting to the Church at Rome gives plain evidence of the foundation of his hope: "Paul, a servant of Jesus
 Rom. 1: 1-4. Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." The seed of David, the Son of God: the Human-divine One. He is not the seed of David by a bold figure, but according to fact. He is not the Son of God by a bold figure, but according to fact. The seed of David is man—as such, no more, no less: the Son of God is God—as such, no more, no less. In personal union, they they are the God-man, the eternal Human-divine One.

The great Apostle to the Gentiles makes this personal union the basis of all he taught: it is implied everywhere. "The Son of God, Jesus
 11 Cor. 1: 19. Christ:" that was the name he preached. And to preach the name was to preach the nature. He did not separate them in thought: he did not confound them. The names were distinct: so were the natures. But the unity is inviolate—the natures inseparable. And the divine was so com-

plete, that the Apostle could say of Christ, what can be said of no mere man, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." There is a sense in which God dwells in us and we in God; but that is not what St. Paul means here: he means the sum-total of the divine attributes: he means God in the fulness of the divine essence. In the man Jesus, God had His peculiar dwelling-place—a dwelling-place such as the soul has in the body; its fulness everywhere manifest; its fulness everywhere in living union and communion with the body—indestructible, therefore inseparable; vital, because the essential part of the united life. Col. 2: 9.

The beloved disciple, as we might expect, gets a lofty view of the Person of Christ. He speaks from experience: he records the things that have fallen under his eyes—the things of which he has perfect knowledge. Hence the positive tone, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." I John 4:14,15 And then he comes to the spiritual side—the side which rules out the judgment of men who have not the spirit of Christ, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." In the same spirit and with like import, he closes the Epistle, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, I John 5: 20. that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

And this puts the Sonship of Christ before us

in a light that sets the Word of God above the methods of the critic. The truth of Scripture is not a thing of outward test, aside from certain acknowledged principles of language and logical thought. It refuses to be judged according to the common standards of judgment. The man in whom God dwells and who dwells in God, that man confesses that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And when he confesses Him to be the Son of God, he means that He is the true God and eternal life. As soon as a man doubts or denies the Sonship of Christ, we know by that very fact that the Spirit of God does not dwell in his heart, and that he is not capable of judging divine things: his world-wisdom cannot lay hold of the heavenly thought.

The teacher, therefore, who exploits world theories by which to explain away the divine nature of Christ, should be shunned as one out of whose heart God has gone, and in whom there rules a spirit that is not of Christ. Jesus Himself said, John 7: 16. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." The disciples could say the same. And filled with the Spirit of Christ, they preached Christ. And when they preached Christ, they preached the Godhead of Christ. Whoever, therefore, denies the Godhead of Christ, is not only anti-apostolic: he is anti-Christ. And so, we should pray as the Church teaches: "O Lord, save and defend thy Church and people from the power of those whom Thou hast not sent."

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN HIS NAME.

THE names of God are expressive of His attributes. His self-revelation, by specific titles, kept pace with the needs of the times. In the history of His people, He made Himself known according to the demands of each new event. And when the fulness of time was come, He had revealed Himself as the God who meets every possible condition of life. This marked the ripeness of the age: the world was ready for the last revelation—the revealing of the Godhead in the person of Jesus Christ, who, being the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person, and uphold- Heb. 1: 3. ing all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. And so, being set on the right hand of God in the heavenly places, He is far above all principality and might and Eph. 1: 21. dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. No such honor belongs to man's name: it belongs to God and God alone.

The Lord everywhere makes His name the pre-eminent one among His people. In His portrayal of the true prophet, He says, "He shall speak in Deut. 18: 19. my name." When David sings of the mercies of God, he finds comfort in the promise, "In my name

Psalms 89: 24. shall his horn be exalted." When false prophets arose, the Lord pronounced a curse upon them because they used divination in His name—

Jer. 14: 14-16. the deceit of their own hearts: He was jealous of His name. The universal nature of the Messianic rule is clearly indicated by the prophet, when he speaks in the name of the Lord of Hosts: "From

Mal. 1: 11. the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles." Everywhere in the Old Testament, the Lord holds His name above every name: everywhere, the prophets represent themselves as speaking and acting in His name.

And now, in the New Testament, there comes a new name that is above every name. It is the name of Him who speaks in His Father's name: and yet He speaks in His own name. It is the name of Him on whose vesture is written, "King of kings,

Rev. 19: 16. and Lord of lords"—the Chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. It is the name of Him who says, "I and my Father are one:" and who neither degrades God nor exalts Himself when He says it. It is the name of Him whose name in the final commission to the disciples is coupled with that of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, and in whose united name is administered the great regenerating rite. There can be no doubt, therefore, as to the place and the significance of that name.

The Evangelist takes the word of prophecy and applies it to Christ: he finds in Christ what history

sets before us as a great authenticated fact: "In his name shall the Gentiles trust." It is but the Matt. 12: 21. fulfilment of that other prophecy: "The forces Isa. 60: 5. of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." It could not be otherwise than that the disciples of Christ should set the name of their Master above every name: He taught them to do it. And so the beloved disciple, as he looked back upon the ministry of Christ, recorded those words which declare His infinite might, with His name as the avenue of its exercise: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to John 1: 12. become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

God gives spiritual gifts in His own name, not in the name of some creature. What He does in His own name is the evidence of His nature. An infinite gift implies an infinite name. And as Jesus gives sonship in His own name—which is outside of the human province or power, He assumes God's prerogative. He gives a clear illustration of this fact, when He makes the statement, "Who- Luke 9: 48. soever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me." We get a negative view of the same truth, with almighty power to indicate its source, when Jesus says, "There is no man Mark 9: 39. which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." Miracles are expressive of God's almightiness. Christ performed them in His own name; men performed them in Christ's name: almightiness, therefore, rests in Christ's name—it is His personal attribute. And he who has

God's attribute—the infinity of it—he is true God.

In bringing comfort to His disciples, Jesus put forward His own name as the name that should be the strength of their heart and their portion for evermore. How utterly hollow His words would be, if they were incapable of fulfilment: “Where
Matt. 18: 20. two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”—a guarantee of omnipotence and omnipresence, not through God, but attributes of His own nature and exercised in His own name. The same thought is made prominent when He says, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in
John 14: 13. my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son:” “Whatsoever ye shall ask
John 16: 23. the Father in my name, he will give it you.” There is no conflict in these promises: they are supplemental in their true inner sense. They are, in each case, God's promise; and He who makes them, by that very act, makes Himself equal with God. No prophet, no teacher, no moralist, no enthusiast, even, has ever told men to go to God in his name, giving them the assurance that God would hear them for his sake. Here, as elsewhere, the life of Jesus is a separated life.

The divine nature of Christ, His equality with the Father, is further manifest when He gives that
John 14: 26. other promise, “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Here are three Persons; and each, by im-

plication, is the Almighty One: the Almighty Father sending the Almighty Spirit in the name of the Almighty Son to perform an almighty act. This declaration of St. John involves one of two things: It is either false; or it is an infallible witness that the name of Jesus is above every name. Those who deny the doctrine of the Trinity and, along with it, the divinity of Christ, brand the beloved disciple, therefore, with writing that which is false. It can not be set to the account of an ecstatic state that swayed his reason: the Fourth Gospel is too sane a treatise for such an inference. It cannot be claimed that he was filled with a superstitious awe: the Gospel he wrote cries out against such a charge. The detractors of Christ are driven, by the very logic of the case, to this alternative: John wrote that which is not true; or they claim that which is not true. It is not difficult for those who know the love of Christ and the power of His name in their hearts, to determine on which side the truth lies.

And such was the almightiness of Jesus' name and so confident were men in its almightiness, that it was necessary to warn against its false use. Hence the words of doom which Christ pronounced against those who will claim, on the day of judgment, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in *Matt. 7: 22, 23* thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" And then will come the answer, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." We have a sad example of this right in Apostolic times.

Acts 19: 13-16 When "certain of the vagabond Jews took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth; the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them." Wicked men and devils recognized the almightiness of that name: they fain would use it, with hypocritical intent, or to carry out their evil purposes. But God's power is in God's name only when it is used by God's appointment and in God's way. The same is true in the case of Christ's name.

The saving might of Jesus' name is declared by the Evangelist as he closes the history of Christ: John 20: 31. "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Natural life is from God; so is spiritual life: but here we are promised life through Christ's name. The name of a heathen god is powerless to give life; there is no living creature by whose name is quickened the power to give life: the name of God alone can do it. Everyone acknowledges this to be a settled fact—except those who make spontaneous generation the god of all life. But the name of Christ is here set forth as the name through which we have life. The nature of God, therefore, belongs to His name.

The almightiness of His name is again made manifest in the final promise: "In my name shall

they cast out devils; they shall speak with new Mark 16: 17,18 tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." These are almighty acts: God alone can perform them—or one who speaks and acts in God's name and according to God's promise. But Jesus gives this promise to His disciples: He gives it to them in His own name. He thus declares Himself to be the Omnipotent One. He says, in fact, "I am that I am; this is my name."

And the almightiness of His name prevails, not only in material things—the healing might as exhibited in His own life and that of the Apostles; but also in the things of the Spirit—the spiritual effect of the preaching of His name and in His name, upon men's hearts and lives. This is summarized in that closing discourse with the disciples, when He opened the eyes of their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer Luke 24: 46,47 and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." And so the entire process of renewal is the work of the Father, in the name of the Son, by the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost.

When we come to distinctively Apostolic times, we find the same unchanging fact. On the day of Pentecost, so soon after Jesus was taken up and received out of their sight, the Apostles made the

unvarying demand, with its unqualified promise,
Acts 2: 38. “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” No finite name could bring down this heavenly gift: it was the ascended Lord that would send it according to His promise.

When Peter met that lame man at the Temple gate, he said, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” The almighty act was performed by invoking the almighty name.

Acts 3: 6. And when he was called to account for it, he said, Acts 3: 16. “And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong.” When he was further questioned as to the authority and the name by which this work was wrought, the answer was,

Acts 4: 10. “Be it known unto you all, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.” The power of God, therefore, is in Christ’s name—not as a mere channel of its exercise, but as an inherent, an essential part of it. The power is in His name because the power is in His nature.

The Apostles went everywhere preaching in the name of Christ, working wonders in His name. The sick were cured in the name of Christ; evil spirits were cast out in His name. They claimed no power: they would take to themselves no praise. In short, the great Apostle to the Gentiles declares Rom. 15: 18. that he would not dare to speak of anything but what Christ had done through him to win the Gentiles. And so centered was his life upon the life of

Christ; and so determined was he that every life should be centered upon it, that he laid down the all-embracing rule, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Col. 3: 17. That covers every possible relation and activity of life: that makes Christ all and in all.

The name of Jesus: what a place it holds in our lives! What an empty house our hearts would be, if His name were not written there! We sing in His name; we pray in His name; we bear the burdens of life in His name. The name that is above every name has the first place in our hearts, because it has the first place in God's covenant of grace. And the name of Jesus is worthy of a place in our hearts, only as we are confident and conscious of the divinity that pertains to it.

There are other than heart-tests: there is the un-failing test of fact. The divine nature of Christ's name is established by the divine acts that were performed in His name, as well as by the divine claims that He made for His name. He writes His name where none but God may write it; in the divine honor and power and glory which He ascribes to it, and which He claims as His own divine right. He does this, not in the spirit of arrogance or of human self-sufficiency, but with that humble quality of heart that signalizes an eternal possession and an inherent right to proclaim it—nay, a moral necessity to proclaim it, that men may have life through His name.

And there is the cold logic of events: there is that deadly parallelism which is fatal to everything that is false. Take any passage of Scripture where some eternal gift is promised or some almighty act is performed in the name of Christ: how sublime in utterance; how supremely sublime in effect! But set some human name in the place of Christ's name, and the impossibility, the absurdity, the deceit, that underlie each promise, become at once apparent. The sublimity vanishes—a hollow emptiness supplants it: the awe-inspiring effect vanishes—a meaningless jumble of words is all that is left. The form is there; but the life is gone: the eye is there; but the sparkle is gone: the heart is there; but the pulse is gone—nothing can thrill it into life.

The name of Jesus! Take that dear name out of Scripture, with all its saving significance; and nothing is left. The heart is desolate: the life is without love. There may be Roman law to regulate conduct, and Greek art to refine it: it is but the power and polish of outward influence. But the name of Jesus goes to the heart: it gives the rule of love. And the love of Christ is the true refinement of the life. The name of Jesus is the power in our life by which we fulfil the law of love: the name of Jesus is the beauty of our life by which we are moulded into the life of love: the name of Jesus saves!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BODY OF CHRIST.

THE objective fact of Christ has had the prominent place in each preceding discourse. They all pointed the truth: The Life of Christ is a Separated Life. The view has been an individual one—it has considered Christ apart from all else. The relations that entered into it were incidental to His dealings with the men He met. The union of the human and divine to constitute the one Christ had specific treatment; but the relation of this one Christ to the kingdom He came to establish and the world He came to save, by the appointed means of grace, has had but a passing notice. To be silent here would be to leave out the essential point. It would leave Christ's work without a definite purpose—at least, without adequate means to effect it.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not come into the world to found a school of philosophy for the intellectual regeneration of the race. He came to round out a history that was promised to patriarchs and proclaimed by prophets: He came into our life to carry out God's plan of salvation through His atoning merit. He taught the people; but His doctrine was not of the speculative sort: His words were spirit and life. Truth was His theme—Himself its incarnation. And to implant truth in the inward parts was His divine purpose, next to the

great sacrificial act. This truth was not scientific, not mathematical, not philosophic, not simply moral: it was the truth that saves. His life, as well as His death, dealt exclusively with that which saves: it all looked to men's hearts and lives.

The religion of Christ is not an institution of outward relations and effects: it is not a masonry of moral principles: it is the fellowship of life. It touches the whole man in every part: it puts a new life into him and incorporates him into the Body of Christ. It makes men one in Christ, animates them with a common purpose, and unites them in a common work. It is the realization of that High-priest prayer. "That they all may be one, as thou, John 17: 21-23 Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: I in them and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one." The fellowship of Christ's people, therefore, is, primarily, not one of outward rule but of life. It is more than Christ for us: it is Christ in us—Christ the Life of our life.

As soon as Jesus entered upon the ministry of His life, He did mighty works. But there was no Herculean hand to display His might. It was like that unseen force in nature—silent, yet surely leading up to definite ends. Every work wrought by Christ was the outcome of an invisible omnipotence: physical strength, human or superhuman, had no place in His life—so different was He from the heroes of ancient date. His word had almighty power in it: when He spake, it was done. And

by the almightiness of that word, He performed all His works of mercy and love. The Word of Christ—He did not preserve one jot or tittle of it: He did not grave it on Tables of Stone. He wrote but once—it was in the sand: the first breeze would erase it. The mere record of the fact is all that is left of it. He never told His disciples to write; until He reached the heavenly throne: then He sent words of warning as well as messages of comfort to the Churches. And yet, He says, “Heaven Luke 21: 33. and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” His word is a living word: His living power abides in it.

There is a definite plan to Christ’s life. The manner in which He fed the multitude is a parable of His method of satisfying the spiritual wants of His people. He blessed the bread and brake it: He gave it to the disciples and they distributed it. He made choice of men who should take the Bread of Life and carry it to the multitude of earth’s inhabitants, even to the uttermost parts. And the supply is sufficient for all people of all time. At His divine touch, the loaves and fishes multiply, now as then, in the hands of His disciples. The Apostles were brought into living contact with His life. They could say, “Christ, our Life.” And Col. 3: 4. with His words of life, His life became the living part of their life. They thus became the instruments of Christ to proclaim His truth and witness to His life. They were living Epistles, not only in what they were but in what they taught.

If Jesus had remained on earth, the visible Head of His people, His work would have been a circumscribed one. And so He gave His disciples the assurance, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Had He remained, the blessed privilege of contact with His life would have been denied to the vast majority of the human race. Moreover, the disciples could not realize the truth of His words to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world," until He should take His seat on the heavenly throne. The gift of the Holy Ghost meant more, even to them, than did the visible presence of their Master: it surely meant more to the world in all ages. The work of Christ was done—the earthly part of it. His Ascension would not destroy the goodly fellowship of the Apostles: it would cement it. The coming of the Holy Ghost would mould them into oneness of life: one in Christ, they would be one for Christ. Thus by the indwelling of the Spirit—His almighty power, through them, upon men's hearts and lives—three thousand were added to the little band of Twelve: and these continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine. They had one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism: they were a unit in worship and in life. They were the visible Communion of Saints.

And now, the Church of the Apostles must do the work to which Christ had appointed it. The promise was, "He shall bring all things to your remembrance." And with what result? The Master had said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." And they went and

preached everywhere. The Master had said, "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them Matt. 28: 19. in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And they planted and watered the seed that saves: they became the bearers of the great personal message, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for Acts 2: 38. the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The Master had said, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted John 20: 23. unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." And they went forth speaking absolutely in their declarations of grace; and delivering Acts 13: 38. the evil-doer unto Satan for the destruction of I Cor. 5: 4, 5. the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Master had said, "This do in remembrance of me." And they Luke 22: 19. offered the life, the crucified and victorious life—the body given and the blood shed for the remission of sins—according to the institution of Christ. Thus from the day of Pentecost, the disciples continued steadfastly, not only in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, but also "in breaking of Acts 2: 42. bread, and in prayers:" they were confident that as often as they should eat that bread and drink I Cor. 11: 26. that cup, they would show the Lord's death till He come. And let it be distinctly noted that all these individual activities were not only in obedience to the commandment of Christ: they were equally the result of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. It was particularly under His guidance that the Church entered upon its appointed office: To preach the

Gospel, To remit and retain sins, To administer the Sacraments. Art, social activities, high-pressure methods, have neither spirit nor life. Word and Sacrament: these are the ordained means for the normal development of the Kingdom of Christ—nothing can take their place.

The pure preaching of the Word, therefore, and the proper administration of the Sacraments are the distinctive marks of the Church of Christ. They are the instruments of the Holy Ghost through which He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies men, and preserves them in union with Jesus Christ in the true faith. Wherever these are, there is Christ. Christ, therefore, is with His Church as truly as He was with His disciples. Every little flock, with Word and Sacrament, has Christ in its midst; for His promise is, "Where two or three
Matt. 18: 20. are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And He gives no assurance, no hope, to those who despise Word or Sacrament: their house is left unto them desolate. These little flocks of God's people, with a distinct congregational life, are to be multiplied until they reach out into all kindreds and tongues and tribes; so that the earth may be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. It is through them that the Gospel is to be preached to every creature.

A state of humiliation is appointed to the Church of Christ. Like her Lord, she gives her earthly life to humble service: like Him, she is meek and

lowly in heart. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." The sin of the world bore heavily upon His life. He had no form nor comeliness; and when men saw Him, there was no beauty that they should desire Him. More than once they laughed Him to scorn. So with His Church. The truth that calls for childlike trust; the Sacraments that reason treats with contempt or strips of significance: these none crave but the poor in spirit. The simplicity of the Church's service—in hymns and prayers and psalms of praise, in the confession of sins and the declaration of grace, in the ministration of the message of divine love: the glories of these things—the comfort they give, the hope they inspire—are hid from the wise and the prudent: they are revealed unto babes.

But the state of Christ's humiliation passed away and the state of His exaltation came. And the Church, too, shall rise up from the ashes at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Her sackcloth laid aside, she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work: with gladness and rejoicing shall she enter into the King's palace. It doth not yet appear what she shall be: so glorious shall be her life; so exalted her estate. But her hour is not yet come.

There is, indeed, a glory in the Church's life; but the natural man does not comprehend it. Nor is it necessary that he should comprehend it. There are invisible powers in nature—electricity, magnet-

ism, gravitation: even the scientist knows them by their effects rather than in themselves. Must men, therefore, insist upon knowing and measuring the invisible unities that God has made essential to the true fellowship of the spiritual life—the inner oneness of the Church with Christ! The mystery of godliness is marvellously great: not only that God was manifest in the flesh; but that the Church which He purchased with His blood is one with Him as well as one in Him. The relation is more
Rom. 12: 4,5. than intimate: it is essentially vital. As we have many members in one body; so we, being many, are one body in Christ. And of this body, Christ is the Head. The Church, therefore, is subject
Col. 1, 18. unto Christ. He loved it and gave Himself for it. He did this that He might sanctify and cleanse it by Word and Sacrament and make it “a glorious
Eph. 5: 23-32. Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.” And so vital is this relationship, that every member of the Church Invisible is a member of Christ’s body and flesh and bones. Every one, therefore, who is not in living fellowship with Christ, is as dead as is the body from which the soul has gone. Every one who is a member of the body of Christ, has the life of Christ to fill him with all the fulness of God.

The union is a mystical one: we cannot comprehend it. It exists primarily between the individual believer and Christ. It unites all believers into one—their common faith in Christ making them one in Christ. And His life is vital to their life: His life is the life-principle of their life. What a

union and communion: one with Christ; one in Christ! If we have this life, we can say with St. Paul, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: Gal. 2: 20. and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

The Church: Christ its Head; its members, those who believe in Christ as the true God and eternal Life. The members in living union with Him—a union so vital, that apart from Him they have no spiritual life: the members in living union with each other, so that they dwell in the fellowship of life and of love. And this was made possible by God and Man becoming one in Christ. It is through this oneness of the two natures that He atones for sin and applies the renewing power of the Holy Ghost. Thus by union with Him who is the Saviour of the Body, the Church shall "grow up into him in Eph. 4: 15,16. all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." This is, indeed, a great mystery—Christ and His Church, one: in fellowship and in life, One!

And how much that means for us! We are members of the Body of Christ; if so be that we have put on Christ. He is our glorious Head. His life by Word and Sacrament, gives us life: His life, by Word and Sacrament, keeps us alive. He has

set these in the Church as the avenues of all union with Him, of all communion with Him, of all union and communion in Him. If we have passed from death unto life, we have the witness of the Word; we have the witness in our own hearts—God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God through Christ. And this conviction is fortified by the fact around which all Scripture circles: "God was manifest in the
I Tim. 3: 16. flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." He who was thus received into glory, shall come again in glory to accept the Church as His Bride and take her home to dwell with Him in heavenly places.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE testimony of Christ and the witness of His Apostles furnish abundant proof, as the foregoing chapters indicate, that He was at once Human and Divine. The Faith of the Fathers, therefore, survives; because the Word of God survives: "We believe and confess: That our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; The Athanasian Creed. God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the substance of His mother, born in the world; Perfect God, and Perfect Man." This is the true Christian Faith: no one can be saved without it. And that is why we should so earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

There are those who would make it appear that this faith has come down from the child-age of our race: that a childlike credulity characterizes it: that in our age of light and learning, we are not to be led by the spectres of the past. The insinuation is satanic: it is therefore subtle. It is an appeal to human pride; besides, it is not true. Jesus Christ did not live in an age of myth: it was as truly historic as the one in which we live. In moral principle and social practice, it was as pure and noble as the age of which we make our boast. In point of intellect, it had master-minds that would measure up to the noblest product of our times.

Away back in the very genesis of God's people, there were moral standards that eclipse our sublimest thought. When Joseph said, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God," he expressed a moral principle which not one man in ten thousand has reached in this age of universal enlightenment, with moral ideas that claim to keep pace with it. When Paul said, "Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth," he gave utterance to a principle which not one man in ten thousand has conceived, much less carried into practice, in this age of noble beneficence. And so, throughout, with every moral principle of life: we have scarcely caught up to the lofty ideals of Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles. We are not, in a moral sense, the survival of the fittest: the most of us are not fit to survive. If we are, we must confess with St. Paul, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

Ours is a charitable age—charitable, along religious lines, in a very bad sense. The broad view—what a subtle enemy of truth and right! The man who is so broad as to be charitable, in moral issues, toward every form of false doctrine, is himself false at heart. The worst possible evil is that outward fairness which, at bottom, involves a false principle. Men will not tolerate it in the ordinary dealings of life. Mathematical truth comes down through the ages: two times two are four, the

world over and in all time. And the man who would lower the standard by saying, "That comes down from the world's child-age, a legend in figures but no longer a fact:" that man would be shunned and exposed by every reputable person engaged in trade.

Mathematical truth comes down through the ages; moral truth comes down through the ages; saving truth comes down through the ages. Broadminded men will scorn the man who would lower the standard of business principles; they will cut loose from the man who would lower the standards of moral excellence. They are very narrow and exclusive along these two great lines that affect business and social interests. Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth into business and social life! But these same lofty-minded men will encourage and cultivate those who strive to undermine every fundamental principle of the Gospel that touches upon the issue of everlasting life. And they brand as narrow and uncharitable and bigoted any man who dares to stand by the principles that were taught by Christ and His Apostles, and whose acceptance is the absolute essential that men may become partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light. The spirit is not one of broadness: there is nothing noble about it. It is a virtual denial of the saving merit of Christ.

This so-called broadness of view, so popular in our times, is Satan's device. He would puff men up with the vain conceit, "Ye shall not die; ye shall

be as gods." He would have men know good and evil as Eve knew them. If some one comes along with a new faith—some old heresy painted in modern hues—the spirit of evil inspires the thought: It will do no harm to hear it; besides, it will show that the Christian spirit is a tolerant one. And so, the most destructive teachings are poured into men's minds and hearts, to the unsettling of their faith and the poisoning of their spiritual lives.

The most of men stand in dread of deadly disease: they would not expose themselves or their children to it. These darling bodies dare not come in contact with microbes. The most of men rejoice in the careful workings of the pure-food law: no adulterations may defile their delicate palates—it might endanger their lives. And the most of men, too, are strong advocates of the old heathen principle, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," in the case of anything that might debauch the physical man and thereby undermine the moral nature. They are wonderfully exclusive and prohibitive along physical lines.

But they will expose themselves to all kinds of soul-destroying heresies—like fools, rushing in where angels fear to tread: they will drink into their spirits that which breaks down faith, leads to the denial of Christ, and works the destruction of that Church which He established as the channel of saving grace. They will do all this, and much more, with the lofty conceit that they are broad and liberal and free from sectarian taint. In point of fact, they are either self-deceived—blind to the

awful enormity of their sin and the terrible consequences that may follow it; or they are, at heart, the enemies of the Cross of Christ.

Where does the trouble lie? Lack of faith: lack of keen conviction as to the worth of eternal verities: lack of confidence in the truth and promise of Christ: lack of love for the Lord who bought them with a price. No man of noble nature will listen to a person who perverts or denies what some one, dear to his heart, has set forth as truth and defended with his life. But men will bow and scrape, and bid God speed, to those who pervert or deny every great essential truth that Christ taught. It marks a positive decline in faith, a letting go of the anchorage of hope, a loss of Christian love. It means that men are adrift on the ocean of free thought—the sport of every evil breeze.

Where the truth of God fills the heart, and the love of Christ inspires the life, there will be no desire, much less effort, to run after strange gods—the vaporings of Christless cults, the attractive settings of a perverted science, in particular, the misrepresentations of what Christ taught and the false assumptions based upon it. It is not intended here to disparage the deductions of a true science—the reasonings of men who see God back of nature, and who draw from nature truths that substantiate, to their minds, the mysteries that shroud the origin and outcome of the physical universe. There can be no conflict between Revelation read aright and Nature read aright. It is the dogmatism of an atheistic science, with its gratuitous postulates,

against which the Christian must sternly set His face. He must bring all science and philosophy, in so far as they reach into the realm of religion, up to the test of that elder day, "What saith it of Christ?" And if it contradicts a fundamental principle of the Gospel of Christ, it must be cast out as subversive of all true development along scientific as well as religious lines. And he who is deceived thereby is not wise.

Truth is fixed; it is uncompromising; it is narrow, if you please. It will not bend; it will not stretch: it is settled and straight. It is not unlike a law of nature—a fixed thing outside of us, not a changing opinion or subjective sentiment within us. Like the Lord who gave it, it is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. In the counsels of eternity, God planned to redeem man by sending His Son into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. In the fulness of time, Christ came as the God-man and reconciled God to man by His death upon the Cross. And the application of redemption, through the atoning merit of Christ, is now going on by the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: he that believeth not the Son shall not see life. He who says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"—it is He who also says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Our poor sin-stained lives: we know what they are! We know it by sorrowful experience; we know it by the revelation of God's will and grace. And

that God should come down in the person of His eternal Son and take upon Himself our nature, so that by His atoning merit, He might lift us up and make us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus—this transcends our sublimest thought. God stooping to our estate to answer the demands of divine justice and fulfil the law of divine love: it is beyond the reach of reason; faith alone can attain unto it.

And this faith is not blind acceptance, with credulity to inspire it. The harmonious testimony of Scripture creates the unwavering conviction, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." And every incident, from God's eternal purpose as revealed through Prophets and Apostles to the completed historical facts of the Christ-life, is so wrought into the great fabric of saving events, that part fits to part with an exactness that proclaims its divine origin and assures its saving end. So certain are we that we are built into this structure of redeeming love and grace—the life of Christ for us, the life of Christ in us—that we can assume the triumphant tone of the Apostle: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

What, then, should be the prayer that goes up from every faithful pastor's heart? Even that of St. Paul: "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in

heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man: that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

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